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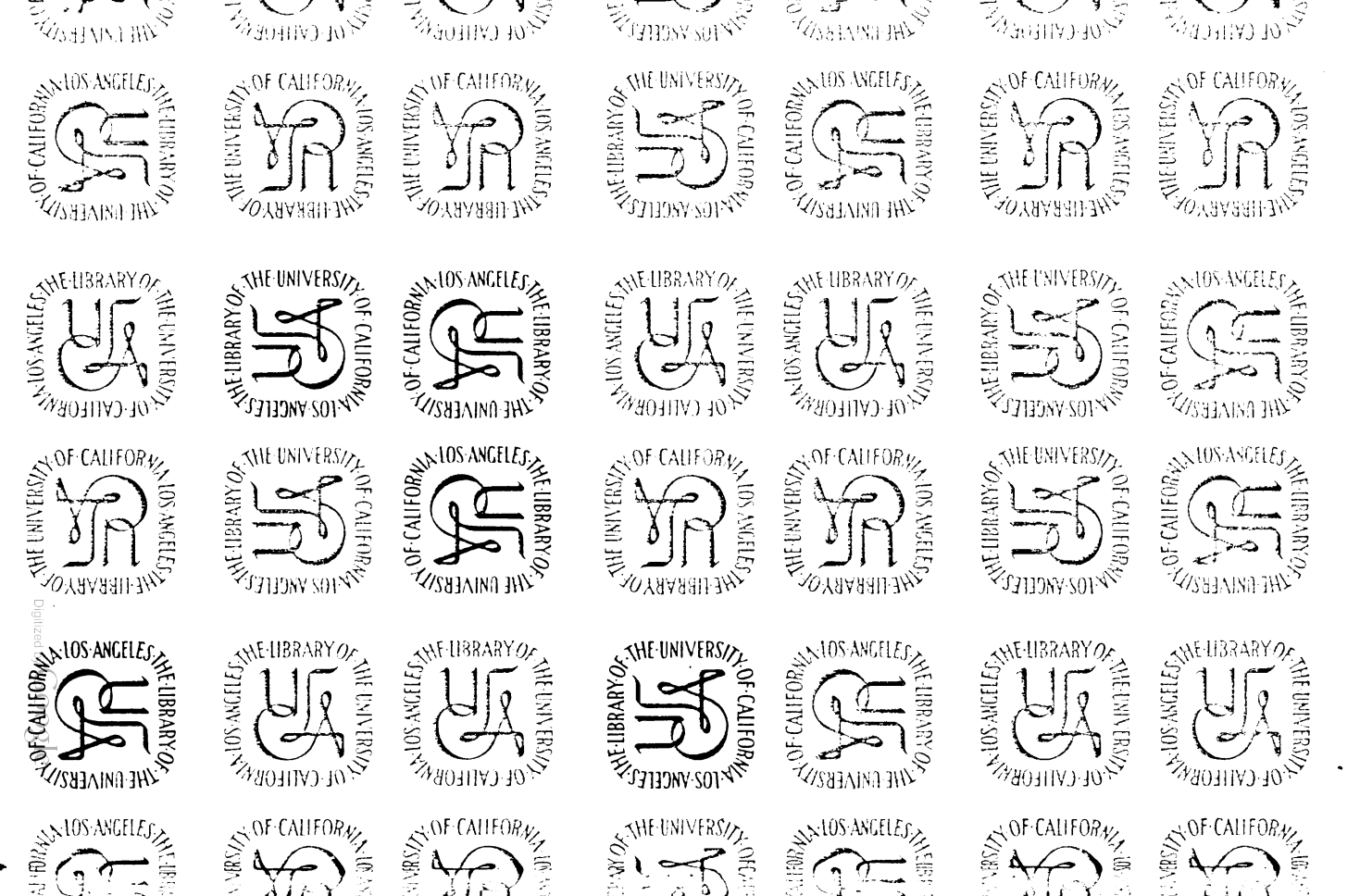
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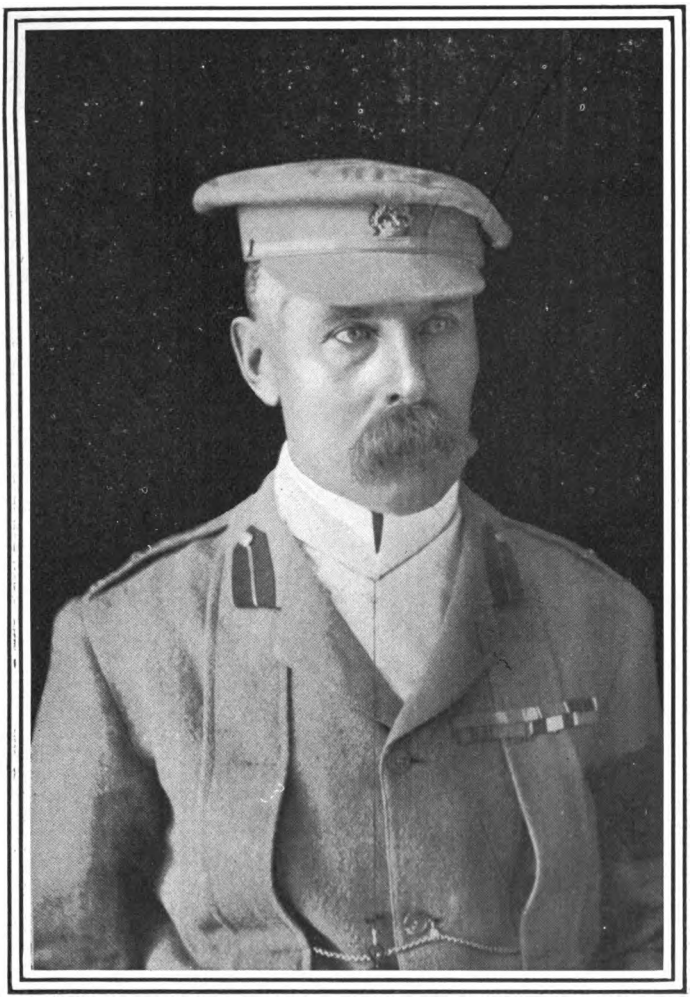

LT.-GENERAL LORD METHUEN, K.C.B., K.C.V.O., C.M.G.

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Capt. Oxley, N.S.W.B. A.P.M. | Capt. J. Warwick, D.S.O. Field Intell. Officer. | Lieut. Mitford, N.F. A.D.C.

Capt. Tilney, 17 L., D.A.A.G. | Col. Bellfield, C.S.O. | Lord Methuen. | Lt.-Col. Wright, R.A., S.S.O.

LT.-GENERAL LORD METHUEN AND STAFF.

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LORD METHUEN'S OX AND MULE CONVOYS.
PAGET'S HORSE MAXIM ON WAGON IN THE FOREGROUND.

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WRESTLING ON HORSEBACK IN CAMP AT KLERKSDORP.

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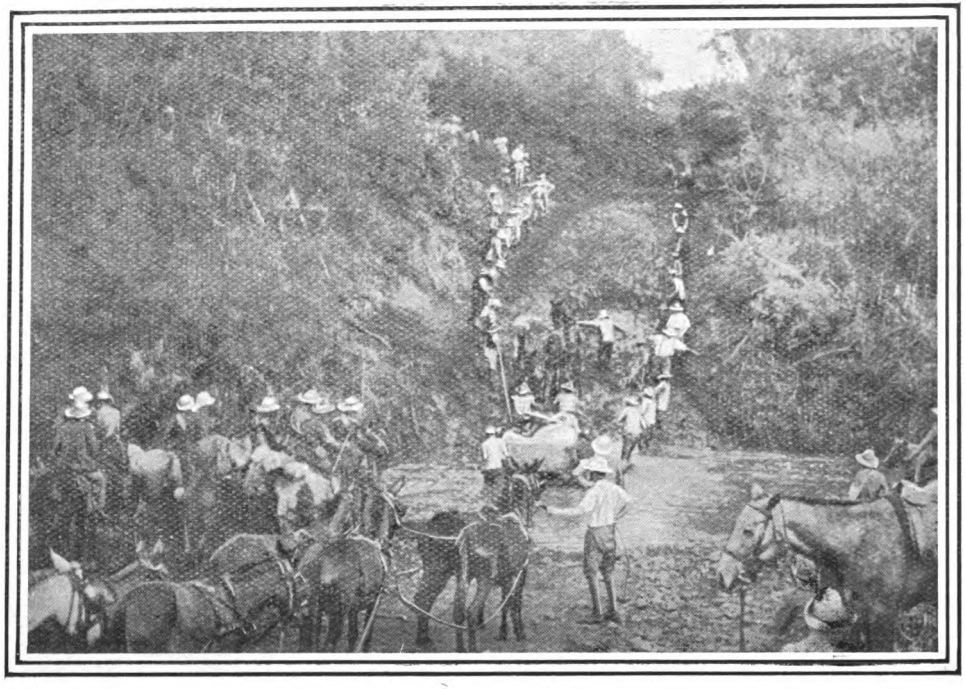

COLUMN CROSSING A DRIFT IN THE MARICO.

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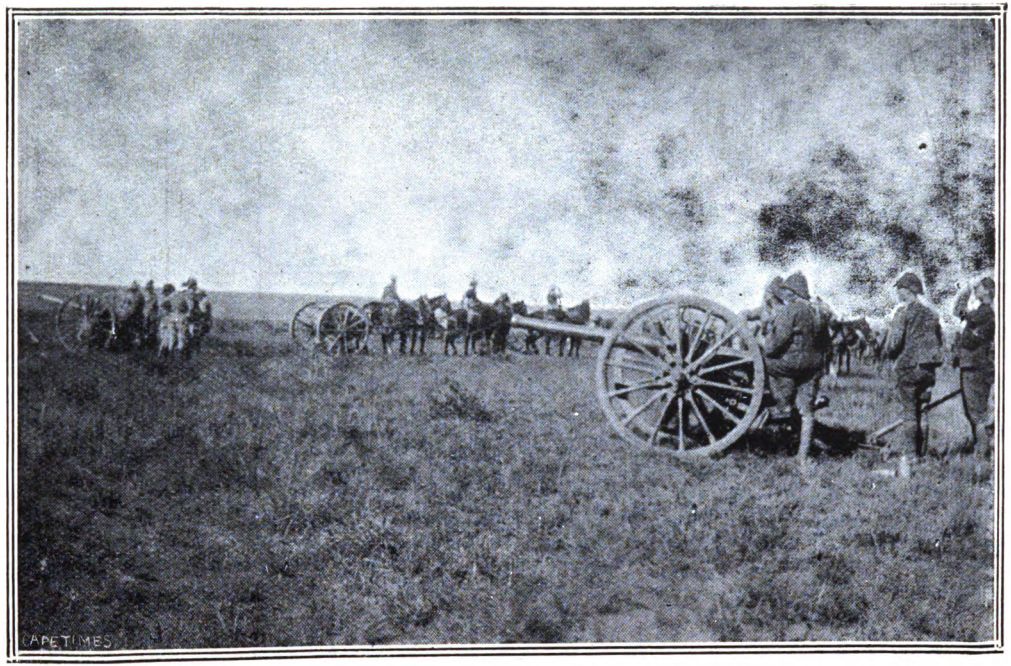

A CORNER IN A FIGHT NEAR KLERKSDORP.

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RUINED FARMSTEAD NEAR VAALKOP, MARICO.

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GUNS IN ACTION. COL. VON DONOP AND LORD METHUEN AT SECOND GUN.

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FLOODED CAMP IN KLERKSDORP.

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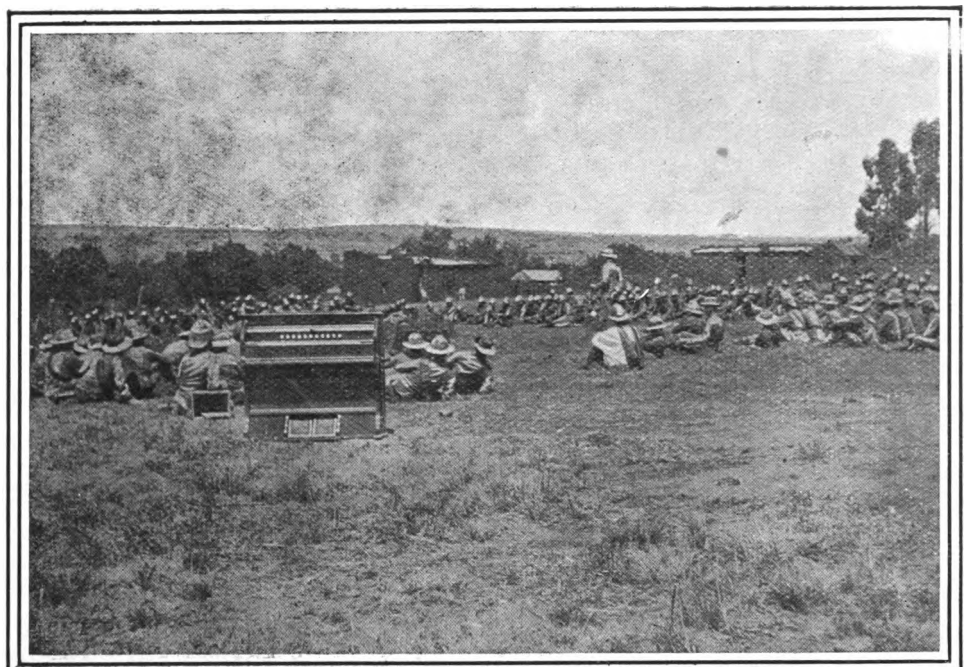

CHURCH PARADE AT ZEERUST. LORD METHUEN ADDRESSING THE TROOPS.

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THE ANGLO-BOER WAR.

WITH

LORD METHUEN.

AND THE

FIRST DIVISION.

TRANSVAAL:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY H. M. GUEST, DE KLERK-ST., KLERKSDORP.

1902.

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PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

The conception of this little work had its origin in the appreciation, by a portion of Lord Methuen's Division, of the publication of an account of the operations during his Lordship's march from Taungs to Klerksdorp in February last. So many officers and men expressed their desire to obtain a more extended and comprehensive account of the operations of the First Division, that the compiler resolved to put the work in hand.

It must be obvious to any intelligent reader that in a little Transvaal village, which for the past six months has been practically in a state of siege, the difficulties of production, literary and mechanical, have been considerable. The compiler and his small staff are members of the local Town Guard, and spend every other night in some of the redoubts which encircle the town, on outpost duty. The only compositor died during the production of the first edition. Postal communication with the outside world is difficult and erratic, the usual period requisite for a reply by letter from Capetown being a full month, and wires, after successfully running the gauntlet of innumerable Censors, ordinarily occupy a longer period (the only route for civilian wires being via Lourenzo Marques) and frequently fail altogether to arrive. The difficulties of obtaining information may, therefore, be readily understood. The difficulty of obtaining material is equally great, as transport, except for military requirements, scarcely exists. In the presence of such a concatenation of adverse circumstances, errors, omissions, and imperfections are unavoidable.

The utmost possible care, however, has been observed to make the record accurate and complete. The compilation has been made from Lord Roberts' Despatches, British and Boer Official Reports, Press Correspondents' Reports, and Diaries and Recollections of Officers and Men engaged in the operations, and the result is a good general idea of the work and results of the First Division, from Belmont to Hartebeestfontein.

H. M. GUEST.

Klerksdorp, Transvaal,
Aug., 1901.

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PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

The present edition of this work includes the story of the operations of the First Division up to date, and also comprises the Official Accounts of the Battles of Modder River and Magersfontein, which were not obtainable by the compiler until a short time since.

It will be noted that the operations of the present year have been almost entirely confined to clearing the south-western portion of the Transvaal, and the work has been performed by the Division in a most painstaking and thorough manner. The Boers have been hammered, chased, and despoiled at every turn. Enormous quantities of stock have been taken, hundreds of wagons and carts captured, many prisoners secured, hundreds of the enemy killed, and quantities of stores destroyed. The cunning of the Boer has been met by clever and rapid countermarching, and sudden flanking movements, and parties of the enemy have been surprised time after time. The slow moving ox convoy has been converted into a moving base, which has assisted rather than retarded the mounted column, and has been utilised to puzzle and mislead the enemy. The history of the doings of Lord Methuen's force during the past ten or twelve months is extremely gratifying and encouraging.

H. M. GUEST.

Klerksdorp, Dec. 10, 1901.

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PREFACE TO FOURTH EDITION.

The story of the doings of the historic First Division of the South African Field Force, and its gallant commander, Lt.-General Lord Methuen, practically closed on the day of the disastrous fight at Klipdrift, when Lord Methuen was wounded and captured. The remnant of the Division was then divided and separated, amid the general regrets of the officers and men, who had fought, bled and suffered in company, but always cheerful and proud of the reputation of their Division and commander. Though divided from each other by oceans and continents, the members of the Division will always look back to the stirring incidents of the trek over veld and kopje, the daily sniping, the exciting chase. and also to the frequent "hot corners," with feelings of pleasure and pride, though tinged with sadness at the loss of gallant comrades, who laid down their lives for Queen, King and Empire.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

Lieut.-Gen. Lord Methuen.
Lieut.-Gen. Lord Methuen and Staff.
(From Photographs by — Taylor, Mafeking.)
Column crossing a Drift in the Marico.
Flooded Camp in Klerksdorp.
Church Parade at Zeerust.
Guns in Action.
Ruined Farmstead.
Wrestling on Horseback.
A corner in a Fight near Klerksdorp.
Lord Methuen's Ox and Mule Convoys.
(From Photographs by N. B. Brown, Paget's Horse.)

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APPRECIATION.

The obverse and reverse aspects of the truism that "Nothing succeeds like success" has been fully exemplified in the case of Lord Methuen. When the brilliant actions of Belmont, Graspan and Modder River succeeded each other in such close order, the public cheered with frantic delight, but Magersfontein changed the cheering into howls of dismay and despair, and evoked much adverse and unjustified criticism. It may be urged in defence of these critics that they were singularly and unfortunately situated. Many of them owned lesser or greater wealth in the Transvaal, which they had left at the mercy of the Boers, others had been thrown out of lucrative situations and were compelled to wait idle until the Boer power had been broken, thousands were absolutely penniless, and many hundreds were practically starving. The shock of Magersfontein struck a chill into the hearts of these people, and their unreasoning criticism was but an outcome of their unfortunate circumstances.

Many weary months have elapsed since that time, and it is now generally conceded that it was no discredit to Lord Methuen to fail where Lord Roberts succeeded with a reinforcement of 100,000 *men and* 100 *guns. Lord Methuen's early victories, too, were gained with an army totally new to the work, and in the face of almost insuperable difficulties in the Intelligence Department. Colonial loyalists were confused with the disloyal, and everything was new and strange to the officers and men alike. But these hindrances were soon overcome, and with the exception of Magersfontein, which repulse was certainly no fault of Lord Methuen's, the career of the First Division has been a a series of uninterrupted successes.*

A non-commissioned officer of the Ninth Brigade in a letter referring to the work writes :—

"I may state that my principal reason for the interest taken in your publication, arises from the fact that Lord Methuen has been our commander, for almost the whole of

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the campaign, and we have ever found him a generous and a sympathetic one. Personally I look upon him as the ideal of a General, and if your publications throw any light upon the difficulties he has had to contend with, and the really good and useful work he has done, I feel certain they will not have been published in vain. Wishing you every success in your endeavours to place upon record the performances of this truly "Tommy's" General."

A hitherto unrecorded incident in the doings of Lord Methuen, which occurred at a place called Bloedzuikerspan, accounts in some measure for his popularity with his men, and demonstrates his thoughtfulness for the man who does the work. At this place there was a well, the convenience for drawing the water being a Bakkies pump, usually worked by an ox or a horse. Lord Methuen, with Lord Loch, rode on in front, and when the infantry arrived they found their General and Lord Loch at the pump, forcing up a supply of water for the parched and travel worn soldiers.

EXTRACT FROM EARL ROBERTS' DESPATCH, APRIL 2, 1901 :—

"Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen, K.C.V.O., C.B., C.M.G., has been in command of a division since the first despatch of troops from England in October, 1899. The manner in which he has kept his command at all times ready and complete for service, the rapidity of his movements, combined with his untiring energy and conspicuous courage have largely contributed to the present comparative quiet on the western border of the Transvaal."—LONDON GAZETTE.

The distinction of K.C.B. was conferred upon Lord Methuen for services rendered during the war.

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With Lord METHUEN.

LORD METHUEN and staff left England ex R.M.S. *Moor* on the 21st October, 1899, ten days after the declaration of war by the Republics, in command of the First Division.

The Division concentrated at Orange River, and consisted of the force already at that place; 1st (Guards) Brigade, comprising 3rd Grenadiers, 1st and 2nd Coldstreams, and 1st Scots Guards; the 9th Brigade, comprising half battalion Loyal North Lancashires, 1st Northumberland Fusiliers, 2nd Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, 2nd Northamptonshire Regiment; 9th Lancers, portion of 12th Lancers, New South Wales Lancers, Rimington Guides, 75th and 18th batteries R.F.A., 11th and 7th (Field), 8th and 31st (Railway) and section of 29th (Fortress) Co., R.E.

At Belmont the Division was strengthened by a 12-pounder naval battery from H.M.S. *Doris*, escorted by a company of marines, which constituted the Naval Brigade. These guns were drawn by mules, but in the first fight the mules stampeded, so the "handy men" supplied the motive power on the field themselves afterwards.

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BELMONT.

PRELIMINARY RECONNAISSANCE.

In preparation for the first blow on the way to Kimberley a reconnaissance in force was made from the camp at Orange River in the direction of Belmont, on the 9th November, 1899. The force consisted of two squadrons of the 9th Lancers under Col. Gough, and the mounted men of the North Lancashires, and Munster and Northumberland Fusiliers under Major Milton, and half of the 75th battery, R.F.A. under Major Lindsey on the right, the whole under command of Col. Hon. G. W. Gough. The force started at daybreak and moved on to Belmont station without any opposition or signs of the enemy, but a patrol on the left came in touch with the enemy at Kafir's Kop.

The next morning, 10th, the force crossed the line south of Belmont, to the east and after some skilful cavalry work the main position of the enemy was located, on the crest of a line of kopjes about two miles from left to right. The Lancers moved to the enemy's right in extended order, and the Mounted Infantry to the enemy's left to investigate more closely. The Lancers as they cantered leisurely along the enemy's front, drew a brisk artillery and rifle fire but not a man was hit. The Mounted Infantry were not so fortunate, coming under a very heavy rifle fire, the Northumberlands standing the brunt, and losing brevet-Col. Keith Falconer shot through the chest. The force having fulfilled its object returned to camp.

Our casualties were :—

Killed:—Col. Keith Falconer, Northumberlands; Lieut. C. Wood, North Lancashires.

Wounded:—Lieuts. F. Bevan, and H. C. Hale, Northumberlands, severely; Privates Beaton, and A. Thompson, North Lancashires, slightly.

The Boer loss could not be ascertained, but our artillery got in some splendidly aimed shots and the Lan-

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cers got their maxim well on the spot, besides which our rifle fire was accurate.

THE BATTLE.

On Thursday the 23rd November, Lord Methuen and his division were astir early. The Guards Brigade moved out of camp about 2 a.m. followed by the 9th Brigade, moving in an easterly direction from Belmont. At 4 a.m. the Guards had reached the base of some kopjes where it was known the enemy were in strong force. The kopjes were thickly strewn with boulders, were very difficult of ascent from the front face and afforded splendid protection to the defenders. The Guards were on the right of the line, and were greeted with heavy rifle fire from the enemy's natural fortress. The aim of the Boers was simply execrable, and it is probable they did not aim at all, as notwithstanding the extremely close range and the total absence of cover for our men who were extended on the open plain few casualties occurred. The Guards returned the fire with interest and shortly afterwards two batteries of artillery shelled the Boer position. After the kopjes had been well searched with rifle and artillery fire, the Guards fixed bayonets and advanced to the assault with a true British cheer. The climb was a tough one, and bullets rained upon them incessantly, but they moved steadily upwards and onwards and were soon on the summit, masters of the position, in time to see the Boers flying across a short stretch of open ground which intervened between the position and a second similar position to the left, which was strongly entrenched and strengthened with skilfully built and placed stone walls or schanzes. The men who reached the top of the position in time assisted the scuttling enemy on their way with a few shots.

The Coldstreams, Northumberlands and Northamptons and some odd units, who were on the left of the Scots and Grenadiers were at same time advancing, to attack the strongholds in their front, marching grandly across the open plain to the Boers' position, a difficult kopje or ridge, every boulder on which completely concealed and protected a rifleman. As the line advanced a few shells were sent over their heads on to the kopje and a maxim played a fusilade against the rocks, when the

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stormers gave a cheer and charged. They were greeted with incessant volleys which checked them for a moment, but rallying in an instant they burst forward with continuous cheers, clambering up the steep hill side, over the boulders, slipping and stumbling over the loose stones, yet ever onward, and without a halt took the position.

The Boers had taken time by the forelock and when our men had reached the vacated stronghold they were well away streaming to a third position still further to the left, which was also very strongly entrenched and fortified in addition to the natural strength of the hill. Four guns of the Naval Brigade under Capt. Prothero, got into position and opened fire at 1,800 yards, and our infantry poured in a heavy fire, the Boers all the time maintaining from the comparative security of their position a hail of bullets on our men. At length the Boers sickened of the fight and bolted towards the dam at Graspan.

A few dead and wounded Boers were found on each of the kopjes, but a number of the wounded were removed by their comrades. Forty-five prisoners were taken.

The Boer lager was destroyed the next day, the 24th, ammunition and explosives being blown up and all rifles smashed.

On several occasions during the fight the Boers were guilty of flying a white flag while firing continued and two of our officers were killed while the flag was flying.

Mr. Knight, correspondent to the *Morning Post*, was with the Northamptons. He was wounded while waving his handkerchief in response to the holding up of a white flag by the Boers—whether by these same Boers or not is hard to say, there were a lot of bullets flying about at the time from all directions.

During the fight some of the Boers left the positions and retired to their horses with the intention of clearing, but Comdt. Greyling shot the horses and compelled them to take their places in the firing line.

The Boers shelled Thomas' farm at the pond where horses were watering, on the evening of the 22nd (the night previous to the fight), and removed their guns by hand late the same night.

BRITISH CASUALTIES.

Killed:—Lieut. Fryer, Lieut. Blundell, and 26 rank and

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file, 3rd Grenadiers; 8 rank and file, 1st Coldstreams; 9 rank and file, 1st Scots; Capt. Eager, Lieut. R. W. N. Brine and 12 rank and file, Northumberlands. Total, 4 officers and 57 rank and file.

Wounded:—Major-Gen. Featherstonhaugh, staff; Lieut. Leslie Vaughan (severely), Lieut.-Col. Crabbe, Lieuts. Proban, Russell and Cameron and 36 rank and file, (slightly) 3rd Grenadiers; Lieut. Grant and 17 rank and file, 1st Coldstreams; Lieuts. Hon. C. Willoughby and Burton and 6 rank and file, 2nd Coldstreams; Major Hon. North Dalrymple, 2nd Lieuts. Rivers, Bulkeley, and C. Alexander, and 34 rank and file, 1st Scots; Major Dashwood (dangerously), Capt. Sapte, Lieut.-Adjutant Fishbourne and Lieut. Festing (dangerously) and 32 rank and file, Northumberlands; 3 rank and file, Yorkshire Light Infantry; Capts. L. G. Freeland and P. Allen and 2nd Lieut. C. W. Barton (severely) and 14 rank and file, 2nd Northamptons. Total, 20 officers, 142 rank and file.

Missing:—3rd Grenadiers 13; 1st Coldstreams 5.

The list of casualties issued by the War Office, after all reports were in, give the number as follows:—Killed, 3 officers, 50 rank and file. Wounded, 25 officers, 220 rank and file. Died of wounds (included in wounded), 1 officer, 21 rank and file. Missing and prisoners 0. Total casualties, 28 officers, 270 rank and file.

BOER LOSSES.

The Boer casualties must ever remain a mystery. It is doubtful whether the Boers themselves know the extent of their losses.

In an official report published at the *Klerksdorp Mining Record* office, which was seized by the Boers, it is stated that a fight had taken place near Belmont, but that they retained their positions.

In a similar effusion issued on the 25th it is stated that the British losses were considerably over 2,000 and that the British were occupied all the next day burying the dead. They had taken up other positions, and that the Lancers having become too familiar they had been reluctantly compelled to push them back. That they had lost two killed and a few badly wounded, while a few slightly wounded had got away.

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The *Friend* published at Bloemfontein gives a list of killed and wounded of the Jacobsdal and Boshoff commandoes which were engaged, a total of 19 killed and 94 wounded, and these are apparently the only losses officially reported, though other commandoes were engaged.

Quoting from a pamphlet published shortly after the battle, being an account by a gunner who served in the Boer ranks during the fight, 500 were killed and 300 wounded, the disparity between killed and wounded being explained by the action of the Lancers and other cavalry. This, however, is obviously an error. The Lancers and Cavalry did next to no damage, their horses being too done up to catch the Boers, who were on fresh ponies.

Lord Methuen, in his official account of the battle says, "I have accounted for 83 killed and have 20 wounded in my hospital, and as their wounded were carried away I may assume their losses were greater than mine."

OFFICIAL REPORTS.

Despatch from Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen as to engagement at Belmont, November 23rd, 1899.

Enslin, November 26, 1899.

Sir,—On the morning of 22nd I reconnoitred so far as possible the extensive and very strong position held by from 2,000 to 2,500 Boers, lately strengthened from Mafeking. I could not leave this force on my flank. I enclose sketch by Major Reade, and sketch by Lieutenant-Colonel Verner (not printed). The evening of 22nd we had an artillery duel between our guns and the enemy's large gun. We fired well; they aimed well, but had bad fuses. We had two wounded, they six killed and wounded.

THE ADVANCE.

My orders for the 23rd were: At 3 a.m. Guards Brigade to advance from small white house near railway on Gun Kopje, supported by battery on right, plus Naval Brigade; 9th Brigade on west side of Table Mountain; at same hour, bearing already taken, supported by battery on left, 9th Lancers, two squadrons, one company Mounted Infantry, marching north of Belmont Station, keeping one to two miles on left flank, and advanced; Rimington's Guides,

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one squadron Lancers, one company Mounted Infantry from Witte Putt to east of Sugar Loaf; one company Mounted Infantry on right of Naval Brigade, protecting right; the force having got over open ground should arrive at daybreak on enemy; 9th Brigade having secured Table Mountain to swing round left and keep on high ground, and then advance east to west on A (on plan, not printed); Guards Brigade conform, being pivot; then Guards advance on east edge of Mount Blanc, guns clearing entire advance with shrapnel; Cavalry to get round rear of enemy, securing horses and laager.

The force marched off silently and correctly; I proceeded to a position in rear of the centre of two brigades. Major-General Sir H. Colville shows the Grenadiers lost direction, and I found myself committed to a frontal attack; sent orders to 9th Brigade to conform to Guards, and having gained first ridge to wait until the guns shrapnelled second line of height. During this assault Lieutenant Fryer was killed, leading his men gallantly. The attack was a complete surprise, for they did not know I had moved from Witte Putt to Belmont, and expected an attack in three or four days. It was perfectly timed, and had the Brigadiers allowed daylight to appear before I reached the foot of the position my losses would have been doubled. Lieutenant-Colonel Crabbe was leading with conspicuous courage when he and Lieutenant Blundell were shot by a wounded Boer—the latter officer has since died. It is not possible to distinguish any officer in khaki, now all badges have been removed, to say nothing of the difficulty of sending a message, the Aides-de-Camp having to bound from boulder to boulder, endeavouring at the same time to keep under cover. I therefore gave the Grenadiers the direction. This was 4.30 a.m., when musketry fire had been opened from the advanced kopjes, and the troops instinctively moved towards the enemy's position. The Scots Guards carried out their instructions to the letter, and gained the heights at the point of the bayonet. The battalion then advanced to the hill east of Mount Blanc, swinging round the left, and advancing up the narrow end. The greatest credit is due to Colonel Paget for the manner in which he carried out his orders, and for the intelligent handling of his battalion when left to his own resources. I note with

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pleasure the valuable services rendered by Lieutenant-Colonel Pulteney, and the courage displayed by Lieutenant Bulkeley and by Lieutenant Alexander. The 9th Brigade had taken a correct bearing, Lieutenant Festing leading, a duty he performed admirably, and I regret he was wounded. Touch was maintained with Guards. A heavy fire was pouring in from the enemy's sangars west of Table Mountain. The Northumberland Fusiliers were ordered to hold their ground whilst the Northamptons were pushed to some high ground on the right to bring a flanking fire on the sangars. This movement had the desired effect of causing the enemy to quit their defensive position. The line then rapidly advanced on Table Mountain, and occupied it after some slight resistance. At 4.30 a.m., the left battery shelled some Boers enfilading our line from our work by Table Mountain, and drove them back. Immediately afterwards the first line of kopjes was crowned by infantry; at 4.30 the batteries were ordered forward to support the infantry advance. Ten minutes later, the Commanding Officer, 9th Brigade, was ordered to slacken his advance until the Boer position had been shelled. It was hard work for this support to come forward, because the horses have not recovered from five weeks' sea voyage. At 5.45, 1st Battalion Coldstreams, being annoyed by heavy firing at 800 yards from Mount Blanc, swung their left round, and carried this steep hill in a brilliant manner, and with slight loss. 1st Battalion Scots Guards now joined the right of the 9th Brigade, and continued advance.

THE SECOND LINE.

I ordered the second line, the 9th Brigade, Yorkshire Light Infantry, and two companies Mounted Infantry, to conform to Guards. Now that the enemy's position was clearly seen, it was clear the original plan of giving the 9th Brigade the lion's share of the day's work was over, nor would it probably have been less costly. The 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards attacked the ridge south-west of Mount Blanc. Colonel Codrington handled this battalion coolly and well. Captain Fielding, Lieutenant the Hon. C. Douglas-Pennant, and Lieutenant Price-Jones merit praise for coolness and good company leading. The 2nd Battalion Coldstreams were well handled, Major the Hon. A. Henni-

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ker's services proving of great value; Major Shute is honourably menticned. At 5.50 the right battery had shelled some heights to the east of Mount Blanc, and 9th Brigade found itself under heavy fire from a high ridge south of Table Mountain; the Northamptons and part of Northumberland Fusiliers went forward and held this ridge. At this time Major-General Featherstonehaugh, to the deep regret of all ranks, was wounded; I cannot exaggerate his loss to myself. Colonel Money took over the command, and the party on the ridge suffered from a distant but severe cross-fire. The enemy was finally dislodged at the point of the bayonet. A coward's trick now occurred. A white flag was displayed, and when within 50 yards our men ceased firing, and whilst the flag was flying a shot was fired by one of the party at our men. The bearer of the flag, followed by eleven or twelve Boers, surrendered.

HEAVY ENFILADING FIRE.

By 5.30 the left flank of the right attack in advancing up a shallow neck, east of Mount Blanc, received a heavy enfilading fire from the heights on the left front, and edged off towards Mount Blanc. The shells from the Naval Brigade cleared this height, and at 6.10 the situation was as follows: The last height cleared, the enemy in large numbers galloping into the plain, the enemy's laager trek-king across me 3,000 yards off, my mounted troops unable to carry out my orders on one side—left—because the retreat was covered by kopjes on the other—right—because too far, the artillery dead beat, and unable to help me. A cavalry brigade and a Horse Artillery battery from my right would have made good my success. My losses are no greater than are to be expected; to keep in extended order, covering an enormous front, to get to the enemy's position at daybreak, saves you in the first instance from flanking fire, and in the second from great losses in the plain. There is far too great risk of failure in making flank and front attack in the case of a position such as lay before me at Belmont; the very first element of success is to keep touch between brigades from the first. Nor is there any question of taking the enemy in flank, as on horse, he changes front in 15 minutes, as will be shown in my next fight. Shrapnel does not kill men in these kopjes,

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it only frightens, and I intend to get at my enemy. I have accounted for eighty-three killed, and have twenty wounded in my hospital, and as their wounded were carried away, I may assume their losses were greater than mine. I enclose an extract (not printed) from the diary of a prisoner, holding a high position, which shows the impression made on the enemy. I took more than fifty prisoners, over 100 horses, many dead on the field; have destroyed sixty-four wagons, and have blown up four large cylinders of gunpowder, taking eight men to lift; 750 shrapnel, 5,000 rounds of small-arm ammunition, a good amount of forage, and as much cattle as I can take with me. Amongst my prisoners are six Fieldcornets and one German Commandant. By 10.30 my division was in camp, by one o'clock all my wounded were in comfortable houses being carefully tended, by five p.m. next day the hospital train conveyed the less severe cases to Orange River, the graver cases to Cape Town. This is the most perfect work I have ever heard of in war, and reflects the highest credit on Col. Townsend. The wound of the Brigadier of 9th Brigade unfortunately precludes any mention of officers who distinguished themselves, nor can I help this fine brigade, for I had little occasion for noticing more than the excellent behaviour of the regiments under fire, and can only select one officer. namely, Major Earle, Yorkshire Light Infantry, whose leading, knowledge, and coolness were noticeable.

Captain Bulfin, the Brigade Major, on whose shoulders a great responsibility rested, did admirable work.

Capt. R. Brise is mentioned for good work done, and Capt. Nugent's services were of value.

Major-General Sir H. Colville has already gained my entire confidence; nothing is ever likely to shake his coolness.

The entire force is animated with the best spirit, and my sole regret is that I have lost, and must lose, many men whenever I have to fight large numbers of mounted Boers in strong defensive positions.

Their tactics and their courage are indisputable, and it is only to be regretted that they are guilty of acts which a brave enemy should be ashamed of.

Your obedient Servant,

METHUEN, Lieutenant-General.

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GUN HILL.

From General Officer Commanding 1st Brigade, to the Chief Staff Officer, 1st Division.

Belmont Farm Bivonac,
November 23, 1899.

In accordance with orders received yesterday, I marched off the 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards and the 1st Batt. Scots Guards to rendezvous at the little house on the roadway at three a.m., whence they were to advance to Gun Hill, and assault it. They were guided by my Brigade-Major, Captain Ruggles Brise, who led them to the exact spot. Owing to a miscalculation of distance on my part, they did not arrive at the house till 3.30, and owing to the semi-darkness, Lieutenant-Colonel Crabbe, commanding 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards, mistook the hill appropriated for the Coldstream Guards, for the south knoll of Gun Hill, and attacking it on the steep western face, lost heavily ; it was during this assault that Lieutenant and Adjutant Fryer, who was leading the men with extraordinary gallantry, was killed. Lieutenant-Colonel Crabbe, who was also leading with great gallantry, was not hit in the assault, but by a wounded Boer, as was Lieutenant Blundell. Second Lieutenant Powell's leading was very noticeable during the assault.

After the capture of this position, the Grenadiers were reformed and ordered to proceed in a southerly direction along the ridge by the General Officer Commanding. This they did, and crossing the intervening valley between the ridge and Mount Blanc, took the valley. The Scots Guards advanced straight to Gun Hill from the rendezvous, and took it at the point of the bayonet, remaining there until ordered by me to form up in the saddle between Gun Hill and the hill which should have been taken by the Coldstream Guards; they advanced along this, then crossed the valley between it and the hill, to the north of Mount Blanc, swung round their left and advancing up the narrow end. I consider the greatest credit is due to Colonel Paget, for the manner in which he carried out my instructions, and for the very intelligent handling of his battalion when left to his own resources. He wished to draw attention to the valuable services rendered by Lieutenant-Colonel Pulteney,

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and to the pluck displayed by Lieutenants Bulkeley and Alexander, both of whom insisted on going on after they were wounded.

I remained with the reserve (the 1st and 2nd Battalions Coldstream Guards) during the assault on Gun Hill, and as soon as that appeared to be taken, directed them to advance from the railway, and leaving it on their right, take the hill assigned to them. Owing, however, to too great extension to the right, and partly to an initial error in direction in the semi-darkness, the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards came under fire from Mount Blanc, at about 800 yards, and Lieutenant-Colonel Codrington swinging his left slightly round to meet this, became committed to a frontal attack on Mount Blanc, which his battalion accomplished in a very brilliant manner, with remarkably little loss.

Our 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards had a tendency to conform with the 1st Battalion, and this also got too much to the right, but I was able to secure half the battalion to co-operate with the Scots Guards in the assault of the hill to the south-west of Mount Blanc. In spite of his error of direction, Lieutenant-Colonel Codrington's battalion was well and correctly handled. He draws particular attention to the skilful handling of his company by Captain Fielding, the coolness displayed by Lieutenant the Honourable C. Douglas-Penant, and the complete control exercised over his company by Second Lieutenant Price Jones.

Lieutenant-Colonel Stopford's battalion had less severe work than the others of my brigade, but I consider its advance under fire was distinctly well performed. Lieutenant-Colonel Stopford particularly calls attention to the services of Major the Honourable A. Henniker-Major and Captain Shute.

I should like to draw the attention of the General Officer Commanding to the assistance rendered me by my Aide-de Camp, Captain G. Nugent, and my Brigade Major, Captain Ruggles Brise. The latter was entrusted with leading the two battalions to Gun Hill, a task in which he was handicapped by never having seen the ground by daylight.

H. S. Colville, Major-General,
Commanding 1st Brigade.

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GRASPAN (OR ENSLIN).

TWO days after the battle of Belmont, Lord Methuen moved out from Graspan, very early on the morning of the 25th Nov. with the 9th Brigade, Mounted Corps, Naval Brigade, two batteries Artillery, two naval 12-pounders *(Doris)* and one 12-pounder each from *Powerful* and *Monarch*, the Guards Brigade following with the baggage, it having been reported that the railway in front was held bya Boer force.

An armoured train, followed by a material train advanced slowly, and when near Enslin kopjes came into action.

The mounted men, supported by the artillery spread out along the front, extending right and left, and the 9th Brigade, in skirmishing order, followed towards the enemy's position which was a long range of kopjes and ridges, steep in front in many places and strewn with boulders and large rocks, forming excellent cover, which had been further strengthened by long breastworks, carefully built, along the ridges and in every place from which an effective fire could be delivered. At about 6 a.m. an artillery duel began, the Boers having four cannon well placed in excellent positions. Heavy artillery fire took place, one Boer shell struck the armoured train but did no damage. The Boers had measured the distance beforehand, so they had no difficulty in placing shells where they wished, and they burst over our men and guns repeatedly, their practice being really excellent. Both batteries and the 2 Naval guns bombarded the Boer position for about 3 hours from a position close to the railway line, on our left. Four Companies of the Northamptonshire regiment remained as escort to our guns during the whole engagement. For fully three hours the artillery fire was incessant, but the Boers were so well entrenched and protected in their natural strongholds that it failed to move them.

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During the Artillery duel the Infantry were drawn up parallel to the front of the enemy's position. When the assault was determined on they moved half right until opposite the left flank of the Boer position which they then faced and stormed, supported by a battery of Artillery drawn from main Artillery position on the left. A containing force of Infantry was left opposite the enemy's position during this movement. As the Infantry advanced to the attack they were greeted with a heavy rifle and artillery Each stone seemed to shelter a Boer rifleman who pumped lead at our men with all their might. Undaunted by the furious blast of bullets, shot and shell they marched grandly to the attack, though every step they took they suffered loss, the Naval Brigade especially suffering severely. The kopjes were reached, and the steep ascent began, the Boers firing at them at point blank range as they scrambled up the hill, and many brave fellows were hurled back killed or wounded, but nothing deterred the Marines, sailors, Northumberland Fusiliers, Northamptons, Loyal North Lancashires and Yorkshire Light Infantry, who vied with each other in their efforts to reach their enemies and get in the cold steel, and they could not have scaled the kopjes better at a sham fight. After almost superhuman efforts and the most gallant disregard of danger and death the kopjes were crowned by our men, but the enemy had made good their retreat and thousands of Boers could be seen scattering across the plain towards Honeynest Kloof and our cavalry were too exhausted to get at them. On the enemy's position being taken the battery supporting the assault came up and Lord Methuen sent for the 2nd battery then away on the left, which no doubt did good execution.

The Boers were reported to have been reinforced the day previous by a large force of men under Cronje, whose idea was to exhaust the British by an all day fight and drive them back at sunset to Belmont, but the little plan did not come off.

In the two engagements of Belmont and Graspan the Northumberlands lost heavily, five companies being commanded by lieutenants.

During the fight a commando worked round to the rear and tried to cut off the baggage, but the Guards effectually

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protected that portion of the field and the enemy retired without accomplishing anything.

LORD METHUEN'S ADDRESS.

Lord Methuen addressed his men after the fight, and read congratulatory telegrams from the Governor, and also expressing sympathy with the wounded. He personally congratulated the troops on the work done and his appreciation of the hardships endured. The work was the severest which had been encountered by the British Army for many a long day in front of the enemy, to whom they could not afford to give one point. Their tactics had been excellent, and he recognised and admired their courage when called upon by their country. The British soldier preferred to fight against a foe worthy of his steel than against savages, whose sole recommendation was their bravery. He had invited one battalion, and perhaps two, of the Highland Brigade to share their hardships and glory. He hoped they had gained each other's confidence, and would do their duty to their country as Englishmen should. He referred to the dastardly conduct of the enemy in firing from ambulance wagons, and wounding and shooting an officer. They used Dum-dum bullets, but he refused to believe they were characteristics of the enemy, and would give them credit until convinced to the contrary. They, as British soldiers, wished to fight fair and square. Addressing the Scots Guards he said they had acted as he expected his old battalion would. Colonel Paget, Lieut. Bulkeley, Lieutenant Alexander, and Lieutenant-Colonel Pulteney had been mentioned in despatches.

BRITISH CASUALTIES.

Killed:—Commander A. P. Ethelston, R.N., Major J. H. Plumb, R.M.L.I., Captain Guy Senior, R.M.A. and seven rank and file, all of the Naval Brigade; one rank and file 9th Lancers; one rank and file, Loyal North Lancashires; seven rank and file, 2nd K. O. Yorkshire Light Infantry; one man Northamptonshire. Total, 3 officers and 17 rank and file.

Wounded:—Capt. R. C. Prothero, R.N., Lieut. W. S. L. Jones, R.M.L.I., Midshipman C. A. E. Huddart, (since dead), 90 rank and file, all Naval Brigade; one rank and

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file 75th Battery R.F.A.; eight rank and file, 9th Lancers; three rank and file, 1st Northumberlands; five rank and file, Loyal North Lancashires; Capt. C, A. L. Yate, Lieuts. P. C. Fennyhough and A. C. Ackroyd and 37 rank and file, 2nd K. O. Yorkshire Light Infantry; four men Northhamptonshire. Total, 6 officers and 148 rank and file.

Missing:—Seven rank and file, 2nd K. O. Yorkshire Light Infantry.

BOER LOSSES.

As usual this is an unknown quantity. The official wire published by the Boers from the commandeered office of the *Klerksdorp Mining Record* states casually that "on the 25th General de la Rey held certain positions and that with his artillery fire he had beaten the Lancers back. That the action began at sunrise with artillery fire and was continued for almost two hours. One of the men states that they shot the soldiers down in troops. V. C. Venter was also engaged with the Lancers and took 13 horses. Four Lancers were taken prisoners, one of whom said that 10,000 soldiers had been engaged and their General named Kogh had been killed! Comdt. David Lubbe was wounded in the right ear, but of any other wounded or dead there was no information." None of the Lancers were missing and we had no General Kogh, so that the Boer information is sadly at fault.

Lord Methuen states in his official report that he had buried twenty Boers and that over thirty wounded were found in the Boer hospital.

OFFICIAL REPORTS.

Despatch from Lieutenant-General Lord Methuen as to engagement at Enslin, 25th November, 1899.

Sir,—I received information on afternoon of 24th that a force of 400 Boers and two guns prevented my train from proceeding near Gras Pan, about seven miles from Belmont. It seemed to me that it would be best to march the division at once to Swink's Pan, which would place me on the left front of the enemy's position, and that if I worked one battery round each flank, sent my cavalry and Mounted Infantry well forward, the greater part of the

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cavalry being on the eastern side, I ought to capture the eastern force. The Naval Brigade and 9th Brigade I left for protecting the guns or assaulting a position if necessary. The Guards Brigade I left with the baggage to march to Enslin, where I had my next camp. The Brigade could always give a hand if wanted. I had left 1st Battalion Scots Guards at Belmont Station, also two companies Munster Fusiliers, because there were 500 Boers and a gun, so it was said threatening Belmont. I made this my divisional battalion, marching straight from Belmont to Enslin. The armoured train with infantry was to give me a help from the line. I started at 3.30 a.m., and was in action at 6.30, my troops being in the position assigned. Major-General Sir H. Colville describes the action of the Guards, but might have said I gave the Brigade rather a longer march than necessary, because I heliographed the Brigade should march south-east, the direction the enemy was advancing from. I had better have said "Come to my support."

My position at seven a.m. was full of interest, for, instead of 400, I have since ascertained I had 2,500 Boers (300 from Transvaal, six guns, one Hotchkiss, one Maxim), and at the same moment I had reliable information from Major Rimington that 500 fresh Boers, plus a laager behind them, were behind some kopjes two miles off, and in my rear. I then heliographed to the Guards, and continued my attack.

ACCURATE ARTILLERY FIRE.

The fighting was far harder than on Thursday, and I would not let a man go forward until I had covered the two high hills with shrapnel. The manner in which the batteries were handled, their accuracy in firing, is beyond all praise, and why this action is, to my mind, interesting, is that you can compare it to Belmont. In the battle of Belmont you have a surprise and one battalion losing direction and suffering loss; in the battle of Enslin you have a position well prepared by shrapnel, the right battery fires 500 rounds, and you have the Naval Brigade behaving splendidly, but not taking advantage enough of cover, and suffering accordingly. The loss was great in both cases, and convinces me that if an enemy has his heart in the right place he ought to be able to hold his own against

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vastly superior forces, and it does our men great credit that nothing stops them.

THE NAVAL BRIGADE.

The 9th Brigade consisted of the Northumberland Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion Northamptons, half battalion Loyal North Lancashires, 2nd Battalion King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. The Naval Brigade was attached to this brigade, and was commanded by Captain Prothero. The Brigade was distributed as follows: Five companies. Northumberland Fusiliers remained as a containing line in front of right of the enemy's position, and did not advance until the end of the engagement; two companies Northumberland Fusiliers, escort to guns; the remainder of the Brigade attacked the kopjes on left of the Boer position. The fire from here was very heavy, and the Naval Brigade suffered severely, keeping in too close formation. The officers, petty officers, non-commissioned officers led their men with great gallantry, and I have great pleasure in bringing to your notice the plucky conduct of Lieutenant W. T. C. Jones, Royal Marine Light Infantry, who, although he had a bullet in his thigh, led his men to the top of the kopje, and only had his wound dressed at the conclusion of the action. The command of the Naval Brigade devolved on Captain A. E. Le Marchant, Royal Marine Light Infantry, when his officers were killed or wounded, and he led the remnant of the Naval Brigade up the kopje with great coolness and ability. The kopje gained, it was found evacuated, and the enemy having gone to the right, their position was enfiladed. The position was taken by the Naval Brigade, Marines, Yorkshire Light Infantry, and Loyal North Lancashires. The attack was ably supported by the fire of the Field Artillery Battery on the right. I beg to bring to your notice No. 1,840, Colour-Sergeant Waterhouse, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, who at a critical moment acted with great coolness in shooting down an enemy who had been doing great execution on our men at 1,150 yards. Lieutenant Taylor, Aide-de-camp, is favourably mentioned. The heights gained, I found I had taken the whole Boer force in flank, and had entirely cut them off from their line of retreat, My guns played on the masses of horsemen, but my few cavalry, dead beat,

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were powerless, and for the second time I longed for a cavalry brigade and a horse artillery battery to let me reap the fruits of a hard-fought action. I buried twenty-one Boers; there were fifty horses dead in one place. I found over thirty wounded in the Boer hospital here, and I have fought distinctly different Boers on the two days.—I am, etc.,

METHUEN, Lieutenant-General.

P.S.—I enclose an interesting account of work performed by the Naval Brigade near the line. Their guns were of great value, and the work performed was of great interest.

Lieutenants Campbell and L. S. Armstrong displayed great coolness in conducting the fire of their guns. Petty officers Ashley, (Doris), and Fuller (Monarch) laid their guns with great accuracy under fire.

I again draw attention to the exceptional organising power of Colonel Townsend at Swink's Pan at 11.30 p.m. I was informed that owing to all the ambulances having been used for taking the wounded to the train at Belmont, I had scarcely a field hospital mounted officer, only three ambulances and three stretchers. I knew I had to fight next morning, so got together fifty blankets in order to carry wounded with help of rifles. I also sent to Colonel Townsend to make arrangements for wounded by three a.m. a messenger having to ride seven miles to him. He met me on the field with full supply of ambulances, and I never saw anything more of him or the wounded, because he had a train ready for them between Gras Pan and Belmont. His only complaint is that there are not many of his mules left, an observation which applies equally to men and animals.

METHUEN, Lieutenant-General.

From General Officer Commanding 1st Brigade to Chief Staff Officer, 1st Division.

Enslin, November 25, 1899.

Sir,—In accordance with orders received last night, the Guards Brigade fell in as escort to the baggage train at four a.m. to-day; it was, however, 6.30 before the whole train was ready to start. We followed the guide of Rimington's Horse to within a mile and a half of Gras

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Pan Station. I saw firing to the north-west, and decided to advance, giving orders to Lieutenant-Colonel Codrington to protect the baggage column with the 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards, and extending the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards and the 3rd Battalion Scots Guards, facing north. During the extension a few blind shells fell near the firing line, doing no damage. At this time (7.30) the 1st Battalion Scots Guards came up from Belmont, and with them I prolonged the line to the left, but soon afterwards received a telegram from the General Officer Commanding, informing me that the Scots Guards were taken as a divisional battalion. I therefore advanced with the Grenadiers and 2nd Battalion Coldstreams, arriving at the east of the Rooi Laagte position as the 9th Brigade was forming up.

There were no casualties in my Brigade to-day, and no ammunition expended.

H. E. Colville, Major-General,
Commanding 1st Brigade.

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MODDER RIVER.

THE BATTLE.

AFTER a day's rest at Enslin the column moved on its way to the relief of beleaguered Kimberley reaching a farm called Witkopslaagte. Reports were numerous that all was peaceful in the neighbourhood and that the Boers intended disputing the further progress of the British at Spytfontein, a range of hills and ridges running across the road some twelve miles south of Kimberley. In the afternoon, however, one of Rimington's Tigers brought in news that the enemy were in force at Modder River, shots having been fired at a party of our scouts from a house at that place. Lord Methuen with some of his staff went forward himself to reconnoitre, but everything seemed serene, and restful. The gentle slope of country to the river was void of signs of life, the tree-lined river and houses on the other side exhibited no signs of Boers, or danger of any kind, and it was decided to advance next morning.

Accordingly, at about 4 a.m. on the 28th November, 1899, the force moved out of camp to meet the foe and clear the road to the goal of their march.

The Guards Brigade took the right flank, the 9th Brigade the left, the line being still further extended to the left by Rimington's Tigers. On the right of the Guards moved the 9th Lancers and the Mounted Infantry. The 75th and 18th batteries of artillery and the Naval guns were distributed along the line.

The Boers were found to be in an immensely strong position on the north and south sides of the river, in trenches which extended for five or six miles skilfully excavated along both the river banks under and among the trees and so cunningly contrived that they were quite invisible and could not be located until fire was opened,

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and even then the positions were vague and ill defined. Retreat from the south side was provided for by a shallow drift or ford which was fordable, and the passage was strongly protected by a redoubt and covered by guns, so as to be perfectly protected from our advance.

The ground slopes up from the river on the north to a ridge running parallel. The Boer guns were in position on the north side, a few hundred yards from the river and swept the open ground on the south side. The houses on the north bank also concealed numbers of Boers and the place was really alive with them. They were commanded by Gen. Piet Cronje who had arrived from Mafeking and their numbers were computed at from seven to eight thousand with seven guns.

At 6.40 a.m. our artillery opened fire on the right, which was replied to by the enemy from several different positions. At this stage of the struggle the enemy had not disclosed their whereabouts and the British were unaware of the extent of the concealed trenches, and their spiteful destructive occupants. At 10 o'clock, however, the infantry advanced, and the Guards on the right had reached almost to within 1,800 yards of the trenches when a terrific fire was opened upon them. The earth seemed to open and vomit a terrible discharge of bullets which whistled through the air and fairly swept the field. The advancing infantry were struck down as if by a sudden blast, every man of the maxim crew being hurled to the ground dead or wounded. The whole force was compelled to throw themselves flat on the ground to escape annihilation, and the whole day the Guards were compelled to lie prone on the earth, the sun rising higher and higher, throwing down its scorching beams upon them until at midday the heat was fully 110 degrees Fahrenheit.

The action was then taken up by the artillery and our sixteen guns hailed an incessant shower of shrapnel into the enemy's trenches and at their guns. Hour after hour the artillery pounded away, throwing tons of iron bullets at the concealed Boers, the enemy replying with their artillery and rifle fire. The Boer pom-poms made themselves feared and detested their demoralising explosions being most effective. For hours cannons, pom-poms, maxims and rifles belched out their rain of death, slackening off occasionally

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to obtain a short breathing space, only to be continued with redoubled vigour and viciousness.

At 3 p.m. the 62nd Battery of Artillery under Major Granet galloped into action having marched from Orange River, a distance of 40 miles in 20 hours, an excellent record for horses which had not yet fitted themselves to the climate or recovered from the voyage. Without a halt the guns were brought into position, the wearied men forgetting their tiredness and exhaustion in the excitement of conflict. The battle was renewed with increased fierceness, after the arrival of the battery. The intensity of the artillery fire may be gauged from the fact that during the engagement our 22 guns fired a total of over 4,000 rounds.

During the afternoon Lord Methuen was hit by a Mauser bullet, and for a short time the two Brigades worked independently but General Colville succeeded to the command and directed operations until the close of the fight.

Towards evening Colonel Codrington and Capt. Fielding, 1st Coldstreams, with Capt. Selheim of the Queenlanders and a couple of dozen men forded and swam through the river on the right with the intent to outflank and enfilade the enemy's trenches, but a Hotchkiss was turned upon them and they were forced to recross.

On the left our men were not idle, and the attempt was made to get a force across the wall of the dam which formed the ornamental lake. The river was very full and the wall submerged, but the men waded through, waist deep in water, on the bank of the dam. Four Companies of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment crossed first and turned to their left down stream clearing the enemy out of some houses and bushes, and then turning right about, came up stream to some more houses which they also cleared, under a very heavy fire and took up a position among some sluits or furrows which they stuck to, despite all attempts to dislodge them. These Companies were greeted during their advance with a discharge of case shot from a Boer gun, delivered at 1000 yards range, probably the only occasion during the war on which such missiles were employed. They were soon followed by General Pole-Carew and Col. Barter with a mixed force of Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, Yorkshire Light Infantry,

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Northumberland Fusiliers, and Royal Engineers, and they all remained on the north bank that night. This was a daring act which completely surprised the Boers who had never contemplated such a performance, and they made room for the reckless fellows, who with bayonets fixed, appeared to them irresistible and invincible, as no doubt they were. The Boers retreated to the rear.

This movement on the left was a long distance from the right, and the Guards Brigade was intended to cross the river during the darkness of night, and clear the Boers out of the trenches with the bayonet, but when it was known that the infantry on the left had effected a lodgment on the opposite bank this movement was abandoned, and when morning came it was found that the Boers had evacuated their position and retired on to some hills near Spytfontein.

It transpired afterwards that the appearance of General Pole-Carew's force on the north side the river convinced the Boers that the battle was lost and they retreated precipitately leaving all their guns behind them, believing that the British were on their heels pursuing them. Finding that the British remained in their positions they gained courage and returned at about 10 p.m. and took them away. Had General Colville been aware of this and had he fresh troops available he could have captured the Boer artillery, and the defeat would have been crushing, but there was no means of knowing this, and the British were unaware of the state of demoralisation to which the Boers had been reduced.

The next morning it was discovered that the Boers had retired, and the Cavalry crossed over, followed by the Argylle and Sutherland Highlanders. Some time afterwards Gen. Cronje sent a complaint that a number of his *wounded* men had been killed by the Argylls. The only incident which could possibly give colour to this vile calumny is, that a party of the Highlanders were fired upon from a house, whereupon they forced their way in, and made things generally unhealthy, but wounded men are scarcely likely to wantonly fire upon men marching past their hiding place.

The scene on both sides of the river was a fearful demonstration of the effect of shell fire. All the houses were simply riddled with shrapnel, and bodies of dead

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Boers were found still in them. Some of them had been converted into hospitals and these were filled with wounded men. The trenches on the south side were strewn with shrapnel and numbers of dead Boers were found in them. Hundreds of thousands of Mauser cases were heaped in miles of the trenches.

Lord Methuen congratulated the men on their hard-earned victory, and indeed, three battles such as Belmont, Graspan and Modder river within five days, was an achievement to make any general thrill with pride in the quality of the men who had performed such prodigies of valour, and cleared the enemy out of of impregnable positions with such comparatively slight loss, and the full value of the victories can only be estimated when it is considered that the attacking force was in the two former instances not superior to the enemy in numbers, and the latter certainly inferior, and about equal in weight of artillery.

BRITISH CASUALTIES.

Killed :—Lieut.-Col. H. R. Stopford, and 10 rank and file, 2nd Coldstreams; Capt. Sidney Earl, 1st Coldstreams; Lieut.-Col. H. P. Northcott, staff; 2nd Lieut. W. Long and 8 rank and file, 2nd Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry; 8 rank and file, 3rd Grenadiers; 3 rank and file, Royal Artillery; 12 rank and file, 1st Northumberland Fusiliers; 15, 1st Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders; 3, 1st Loyal North Lancashires. Total, 4 officers and 59 rank and file.

Wounded :—Lieut.-Gen. Lord Methuen; Major Count Gleichen 1st Grenadiers; Lieut. Hon. E. Lygon, 2nd Lieut. A. H. Travers, and 40 rank and file 3rd Grenadiers; Lieut. Viscount Acheson and 20 rank and file 1st Coldstreams; Major Lindsay, Capt. Farrell, Capt. Guise Moore, Lieut. Dunlop, Lieut. Furse and 24 rank and file, Royal Field Artillery; Capt. N. G. Vonhugel and 2 rank and file, Royal Engineers; Lieut. H. E. Elwes, and 2nd Lieut. W. J. M. Hill, 1st Scots Guards; Lieut. R. B. Flint and 14 rank and file 1st Loyal North Lancashires; Major H. Earle, Major G. F. Ottley, Lieut. R. M. D. Fox, and 46 rank and file 2nd King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry; Lieut. H. B. Baker Carr and 92 rank and file 1st Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders; and the following rank and file—9th Lancers, 1; Mounted Infantry, 2; Rimington's Scouts, 3;

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2nd Coldstream, 56; 1st Northumberland Fusiliers, 69; Royal Army Medical Corps. 1. Total,—18 officers and 370 rank and file.

Missing:—3rd Grenadiers 5; 1st Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 2. Total 6.

BOER CASUALTIES.

The veracious official report issued by the Boers from the commandeered office of the *Klerksdorp Mining Record*, bears very little testimony as to their own losses. In one of these dated Nov. 30 General de la Rey says his dead and wounded are about eighteen, one of whom was his eldest son who died that morning.

Reports of correspondents of reputable English papers say that they saw many dead in the trenches and that many wounded were in the houses. An official account says that 50 Boer wounded were treated in the British military hospitals. The special correspondent of the *Cape Times* state that at least one hundred bodies of dead Boers were thrown into the river, and the bodies of thirty others were buried in the sand by them, and that the Boer ambulances were carrying away their casualties all day. He estimated the killed at 200. Further that 300 Boers wounded were lying in two Boer hospitals four miles north of the river. In corroboration of the statement that many bodies were thrown into the river, numbers of dead bodies were fished out of the river by our men, in each case stones being tied to them to keep them under.

BOER REPORTS.

The Boer reports of the batttle are delightfully vague and ill defined, the matter being treated as of no importance whatever.

We quote again from the official reports printed in Klerksdorp:—

"Pretoria, Nov. 29, 1899.

"With reference to the fight yesterday at Modder River, south of Kimberley, full reports are not yet to hand.

"The Landdrost of Jacobsdal reports that a despatch rider of the enemy had been captured and brought in, from the

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side commanded by Lord Methuen. The despatch found on him was translated as follows :—

"From Colonel of 4th Brigade, Modder River, 2 p.m.
"To Lord Methuen.

"Was half way to the bridge but was beaten back. 80 Coldstreams and 4 companies Engineers could not stand their ground. The troops cannot and will not proceed further, and have been beaten by the Boers on the left flank."

"General de la Rey reports this morning from Jacobsdal :—Yesterday we had a heavy fight which lasted twelve hours. I had about 800 men and there were about 1,000 Free Staters. The enemy numbered at least 10,000. Between one and two o'clock they were driven back by the Transvaal burghers, where the attack was first made, afterwards the fight turned to the westward, where the Free Staters were in position, who also drove the enemy back. Towards dark we slowly retired to our positions. My dead and wounded number 18, among the dead being my eldest son. The Free Staters doings are unknown to me. From information received the loss of the enemy must have been very great.

"General Cronje reports under date 1st December that he had not received full report of the fight on the 28th, but that it continued from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. Only between 5.30 and 7 p.m. was the enemy completely defeated and driven back. Considering that the fighting was mostly on our side our losses were small, but further information will be afforded the Intelligence Department later."

This promised further information was never published in Klerksdorp.

It will be noted that the 4th Brigade, from the Colonel of which the captured despatch purports to emanate, was not at Modder River, and the retiring to our former positions after driving back the enemy is ingenious if not ingenuous.

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OFFICIAL DISPATCH.

From the Lieutenant-General Commanding the 1st Division to the Chief Staff Officer.

Modder River,
December 1, 1899.

Sir,

I have the honour to report to you that on my arrival at Witkop on November 27 I proceeded to reconnoitre the Modder River, and, from the information I had received, came to the conclusion that the entire force of the enemy had assembled at Spytfontein, and that I should not meet with any determined resistance on the Modder.

I, therefore, decided the next morning, under cover of my Artillery, and protected by my Cavalry and Mounted Infantry, to throw up proper protection for my railway, leaving the Northamptonshire Regiment, 300 Engineers, the Naval Brigade, and three guns. I intended next day to have taken my force, with five days' rations, via Jacobsdal, Modder River, to some dams east of Spytfontein, and to have thence delivered my attack.

On the morning of 28th November information reached me through a native that Modder River village was strongly occupied, and I therefore did not feel justified in running any risk regarding the railway, and decided to establish myself on Modder River, before proceeding any further.*

I proceeded at 4 a.m. with the mounted troops, the guns coming on so soon as sufficiently protected by the Infantry. In the village itself we could not see any signs of men, guns, or wagons, but to the east of the village we found the enemy in strong force, and aggressive. I had arranged with the Officer Commanding Royal Artillery to prepare the Infantry attack with both batteries from the right flank, and the Infantry Division being still some miles distant, I gave them two distinct points to march on, which allowed of the brigades keeping in extended order and covering a very wide front.

As will be seen in the report of the Officer Commanding Royal Artillery, the guns were soon engaged with the enemy on our right flank, the 9th Lancers and Mounted Infantry co-operated with the guns in protecting this flank. The enemy brought three guns into action under perfect cover, and fired with great accuracy. Our guns, 75th and 18th Batteries, eventually disabled one gun,

* All my information was to the effect that the Modder and Riet Rivers where fordable anywhere, information which proved quite incorrect.

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and with a stronger force of the Cavalry it might have been possible for me to have secured it.

The enemy appeared to be retiring, and there were no signs that the village was held in strength. We all believed the force in our front was fighting a retiring action, and had no idea 8,000 Boers had been brought from Spytfontein to oppose us.

In no case is it a position to be turned by a wide detour, and I felt sure my right course was to keep my two brigades in touch, widely extended, and trust to their gaining the opposite bank, as was done. Any other course must be attended with great risk, when opposite 8,000 horsemen with a river to assist them. In any case the Modder village is not a position I could turn by making a wide detour.

The Guards Brigade had orders to develop their attack first, which they did with the first Battalion Scots Guards on the right, with orders to swing their right well round in order to take the enemy in flank, the 2nd Battalion Coldstreams and the 3rd Battalion Grenadiers making the frontal attack, the former on the left to keep touch with the 9th Brigade. The 1st Battalion Coldstreams in reserve in the right rear.

At 8·10 a.m. a sudden and very heavy fire announced that the enemy held the river in great strength, and perfectly concealed. Many casualties now occurred, and the Scots Guards Maxim detachment were completely wiped out. The two companies pushed on until they suffered again heavily from enfilade fire, Col. Paget's horse, hit in five places, being killed. At 8·10 a.m. the 1st Battalion Coldstreams extended, and swinging the right round, prolonged the line of the Scots Guards to the right. The Riet River prevented any further advance. The troops then lay down, being fairly under cover in that position. Two companies Scots Guards fell back by order of the Brigadier to a reservoir, to secure the right flank, which I think was quite secured, as a matter of fact, by my mounted troops. The 3rd Battalion Grenadiers and 2nd Battalion Coldstreams advanced to within 1,100 yards of the enemy, lay down, and held their own. Captain Heneage tried to advance further, and lost four sergeants.

Meanwhile the 9th Brigade had advanced the Northumberland Fusiliers along the east side of the railway line, supported by half a battalion of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. The Yorkshire Light Infantry advanced along the west side of the railway, supported by the remaining half battalion of Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. The half battalion Loyal North Lancashire prolonged the line to the left, and endeavoured to cross the river and threaten the enemy's right flank. The six companies Northamptons acted as a baggage guard.

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The 9th Brigade had the same hard task before it that faced the Guards Brigade—on the extreme left an outcrop of rocks and small kopjes on the left bank of the river, considerably in advance of the enemy's main position, were strongly held by the enemy, and checked the advance of the Loyal North Lancashire. Some 600 yards east, the same side of the river, a farm house and kraal on a slight eminence covering the dam and drift at the west end of the village, also strongly occupied, checked the advance. A withering fire from these buildings checked the advance of the Brigade. They were, however, carried, early in the afternoon by two companies of the Yorkshire Light Infantry, under Lieut.-Col. Barter, together with some Highlanders and Northumberland Fusiliers. Lieutenant Fox, Yorkshire Light Infantry, gallantly led this assault; he was severely wounded. Almost at the same moment the rocks and kopjes on the extreme left were carried by the Loyal North Lancashire. We had now won the river and west side of village, out of which the enemy were soon chased. Major-General Pole-Carew led his men in a gallant manner for three-quarters of a mile up the bank, when he was forced back, and had to content himself with holding a fairly good position he had gained on the right bank.

I had promised Major-General Pole Carew to send him what troops I could get, and it was in this successful endeavour that Lieut.-Col. Northcott, who never left me, fell mortally wounded. The Army has lost one of the ablest Officers in Her Majesty's Service, and I cannot express the grief his death has caused me. He was beloved by every one who knew him. I received a flesh wound shortly after 5·30, and told Major-General Sir H. Colville to take over the command.

During the entire action, the 75th and 18th Batteries had vied with one another in showing gallantry and proficiency. I dare not write more than Colonel Hall has written, his modest account scarcely doing justice to the splendid conduct of our gunners. The 62nd Battery, marching from Belmont, came straight into action, and were of great service.

Col. Paget, having taken over command of the Guards Brigade, Major-General Sir H. Colville quite rightly did not care to rush the passage to the river with tired troops.

Col. Hall points out it would have been better that he should have known the point of attack, but the truth is that when no one can get on a horse with any safety within 2,000 yards of the enemy, orders cannot be conveyed, and, personally, I am first to admit I was for most of the day in positions I had no right to be in, because I could only see how the fight was progressing by going to the front.

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I have much pleasure in bringing to your notice the names of the following Officers and rank and file who distinguished themselves during the day:—

Major Count Gleichen, C.M.G., for the coolness shown by him throughout the engagement, especially attending to the wounded under a heavy fire.

Sergeant Brown and Private Martin, 3rd Battalion Grenadier Guards, who helped him were both shot.

Sergeant-Major Cooke, 3rd Battalion Grenadiers, displayed remarkable coolness under fire.

Lieut. the Honourable A. Russell showed great coolness in working the machine gun, which he did with marked success.

Major Granville Smith, Coldstream Guards, in volunteering to find a Ford, which he did in dangerous mud, and a strong river.

Captain and Adjutant Steele, Coldstream Guards, for excellent service during the day.

Sergeant-Major S. Wright, Coldstream Guards, showed great coolness when a change of ammunition carts was being made, and was of great value at a critical time.

Native Driver Matthews for making the other natives stick to their carts, when they would otherwise have bolted.

Drill and Colour-Sergeant Price, Coldstream Guards, at Belmont, and at Modder River, rendered excellent service whilst commanding half a company.

Drill and Colour-Sergeant Plunkett, Coldstream Guards, collected 150 men, and helped the 9th Brigade crossing the river under Captain Lord Newtown Butler.

No. 1825 Lance-Corporal Webb, Coldstream Guards, twice asked leave to go into the open to bind up the wounds of a Grenadier; under a heavy fire, he succeeded in his object.

Captain Hervey Bathurst, Grenadier Guards, was of great value in rallying a number of Grenadiers and Coldstreams shaken by the fire.

I again call attention to Colonel Paget's cheerfulness and intelligence under the most trying surroundings.

He draws attention to Captain Moores, Royal Army Medical Corps, who, although wounded in the hand, said nothing. but continued his duties. Also, he draws attention to the good services of the Master of Ruthven, Scots Guards. The valuable services of Captain Nugent, Aide-de-Camp and Captain Ruggles-Brise are again noted.

The names of Lieutenant-Colonel Barter, King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, and Major the Honourable C. Lambton, Northumberland Fusiliers, are mentioned for having rendered in-

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valuable assistance to their Brigadier. Captain Bulfin, Yorkshire Regiment, did his duty admirably.

Lieut. Percival, Northumberland Fusiliers, managed with great difficulty to establish himself with a small party on a point near the railway, from which, by his judgment and coolness, he was able to keep down the fire of the enemy, many of his small party being killed.

3499 Lance-Corporal R. Delaney,
4160 Private J. East,
4563 Private Segar,
4497 Private Snowdon,

Northumberland Fusiliers, under a very heavy fire picked up and brought in a wounded man of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, No. 3955 Private Smarley, Northumberland Fusiliers, No. 1 of a Maxim detachment, who showed great coolness and judgment when wounded.

Major Lindsay, Royal Artillery, 75th Battery, ignored a painful wound, and continued in command of his battery. Lieut. Begbie, Royal Artillery, suddenly placed in command of his battery, led it, and brought it into action with great coolness.

Captain Farrell wounded a second time, continued to do his duty, having first placed a wounded man on one of the gun carriages. Wounded gunners and drivers continued at their duty.

Lieut. Rochford Boyd, Royal Artillery, on this, as on former occasions, showed himself reliable and capable of acting without orders.

I personally bring to notice the value of Lieut.-Col. Rhodes' service and Major Streatfeild's service in sending forward reinforcements to Major-General Pole-Carew, for on this movement the result of the evening's success depended.

I cannot too highly commend the conduct of the troops, ably assisted by the Naval Brigade, for on them the whole credit of our success rests. The next morning we found the enemy had quitted the position, which I understood was one of very great strength.

As regards the losses of the enemy, 23 bodies have been found, and the inhabitants informed me that the dead were buried at once in the gardens, and the wounded conveyed away to Jacobsdal. I had to bury nearly 200 horses.

All evidence tends to show that at 2 a certain number began to clear, and that at 4 a good number more moved off; that the leaders lunched in the hotel I am now writing from, and were utterly disheartened at our stubbornness. I expect one more fight at Spytfontein will convince a great number of the Orange Free Staters that it is better not to continue fighting. I am thankful

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the list of casualties is no greater than it is, for many of the cases are slight.

Again I call attention to the splendid hospital arrangements, for at 4·45 p.m. on the day after the fight all my wounded were on their way to Capetown.

I am glad to have been slightly wounded, because in no other way could I have learnt the care taken of the wounded, and there was nothing Officer or private soldier required that was not provided at once, and the Medical Officers never tired in their endeavour to alleviate suffering.

I have, &c.,

METHUEN,

Lieut.-General.

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MAGERSFONTEIN.

PRELIMINARIES.

LORD Methuen's injury received at Modder was but a flesh wound, and he resumed command the day after the fight, the 29th. The division went into camp on the battlefield for a well-earned and much needed rest.

The engineers at once started repairing the wrecked railway bridge, and making a temporary bridge over the river.

Patrols were kept out in front and the enemy located on Spytfontein kopjes and at Scholtz's Nek or Magersfontein. Shots were continually exchanged between the scouting parties.

After Modder River battle, orders were received that the 9th Brigade having performed more than its share of work during the fighting week, its place in the advancing column will be taken by the Highland Brigade which consisted of the 1st Gordons, 1st Argyll and Sutherlands, 1st Highland Light Infantry and the Black Watch, under Major-General Wauchope, and this Brigade duly arrived and joined Lord Methuen's column.

FIGHT AT ENSLIN.

On the morning of Thursday, Dec. 7th, two companies of the Northamptons under Capt. Godley, stationed at Enslin were attacked by a Boer force.

The Boers were about 1,000 strong and had a 15 and 12-pounder with them. As soon as the Boers' presence was known Lieut. Brierly of the Lancashire Fusiliers, attached to the Northamptons with an outpost of 35 men were on a kopje some 1,200 yards from the station, the remainder of the force holding the station and buildings. Heavy firing continued for seven hours, but the Boers had not the courage to attempt to rush either the kopje or the station, and the small garrison held them completely in check.

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Their scouts having brought them news that reinforcements were coming from Belmont and Modder River they cleared off taking their guns with them.

It appears that four Boers were captured a few days previously, unarmed and with red crosses on their arms. They were released and sent in the direction of Jacobsdal. Just after the fight at Enslin a wounded man was found, who before he died stated that the red cross men brought to the Jacobsdal commando full details of the Enslin camp, the weak state of which according to this information led to the attack.

A RECONNAISSANCE.

On the morning of Dec. 9th a 4.7 naval gun, with her bluejackets and marines started off about 2.30 to investigate the enemy's positions at Spytfontein and annoy them. The gun had been called "Joe Chamberlain" by the sailors and they thought it was quite fitting that the original Joe having talked enough diplomatic language, it was time his namesake conversed in a more striking emphatic sort of manner. The gun was drawn by a span of thirty oxen which dragged it along with ease, and it is from the fact that oxen are used to draw these and other heavy guns that the term "cow gun" was applied to heavy ordnance used in the campaign.

Later, the 3rd battery of Artillery, 9th Lancers, Mounted Infantry and Rimington's Scouts moved out, followed by the 1st Northumberlands. The naval gun was brought to a halt near the platelayer's cottage at a distance of about 7,000 yards from the enemy's position. The battery of Artillery, the Rimingtons and the Northumberlands took direction to the left and the Lancers and Mounted Infantry to the right.

Some rifle firing ensued but the main object of the reconnaissance was undoubtedly to give the 4.7 a chance of trying its range and lyddite. Fifteen shells were fired from the gun and the disturbance caused by the explosion of the shell was extensive. After a lively demonstration the force returned to camp.

AN ARTILLERY FIGHT.

On the following day, 10th (says Reuter), at about 4 p.m. the Howitzer Battery moved out to the right and took up a

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position to the south-east on a projecting hill to the left of the Boer position. At the same time the Naval detachment placed a 4.7 inch gun on their old position on the ridge to the north of the camp. General Carew watched the operations in the neighbourhood of the naval guns. A brisk fire was opened by the naval guns, soon after followed by the howitzer. Both fired lyddite, shrapnel, and common shell. The Boers replied, it is estimated, with seven guns. A sharp artillery duel between the howitzer and Boer guns ensued, and the Boers unmasked their position, which was the object of the manœuvre.

After an hour's interval the Boer guns were one by one silenced. The howitzer then thoroughly searched the trenches, which being constructed facing south, were fairly enfiladed. Afterwards the howitzer turned its attention to the kopjes, shell after shell bursting along the ridges. The effect of the lyddite was magnificent, the whole ground within the area of destruction being torn up, and brown clouds of dust rising into the air.

The naval guns also made grand practice, and dismantled a long-range gun. The Boers did not reply, although they possessed a 40-pounder, which, it is believed, was unable to approach the range of either the howitzer or naval gun. A battery of horse artillery moved in a north-easterly direction, but as far as it could be possibly seen they did not engage the enemy. The wonderful power of the lyddite and the accuracy of the fire must have a great effect upon the Boers, who received a heavy bombardment and a searching fire without being able to return it. The guns were kept in position all night, the rain pouring down in torrents all the time.

THE BATTLE.

On the morning of the 11th, while it was yet dark, Lord Methuen's force marched out of camp to attack the enemy in their positions at Magersfontein.

The force consisted of the 9th and 12th Lancers, Naval Brigade with a 4.7 gun, G battery of the Royal Horse Artillery, 75th, 62nd, 73rd, 18th, and 65th batteries Field Artillery, Highland Brigade, Guards Brigade, 9th Brigade (in reserve) Mounted Infantry, Rimington Guides, some Army Service Corps and Field Hospital Corps.

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The centre of the enemy's position was a high commanding kopje which overlooked the plain, and seemed to frown menacingly upon the rash intruder who came advancing over the veld to assault it. To the right the ridges were of lesser height and curved back. On the left the kopjes and ridges in continuation were lower and became scattered, the high point of Magersfontein near which the farmhouse of the owner, Mr. Bisset, is situated, being a bold promontory or bluff projecting out into the undulating plain in front. Across the open plain the force moved in the darkness, quietly and cautiously, all orders being given in whispers, the idea being to surprise the enemy in their position and carry it by a bold attack. The Guards were on the right and their direction brought them to the right of the big position, the Highlanders on their left advanced directly to the face of the bluff, the 9th Brigade being in reserve in their left rear.

The Highlanders were marching in quarter column with the brave Gen. Wauchope at their head ready for a rush forward as soon as the enemy's position was revealed. At the foot of the kopjes trenches had been cunningly made one behind the other, the soil being carefully disposed over the ground so that our scouts had not observed them, the little dots of scrub occurring all over the foot of the hill effectually screening them. Subsequent investigation has revealed that the position was protected by some twenty miles of trenches, dug wherever the nature of the ground permitted such shelter to be placed with advantage and effect. All this was unknown to our men. The hill itself was occupied by Boers concealed behind the stones and was simply full of concealed riflemen.

It was against this position, which the Highlanders marched on that fateful morning. When they had arrived within a couple of hundred yards of the foot of the hill, expecting every instant to come in touch with the enemy, some of the leaders may have touched a signal wire or the Boers may have been awake and on the alert, watching the moving mass of men coming towards them. Anyhow a single rifle shot rang out in the morning air and suddenly the earth at their feet, and the hill in front of them became illumined with a sudden blaze of fire, and thousands

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of bullets, delivered at close range swept and crashed into the crowd of men, melting down the front ranks and throwing them into momentary confusion. General Wauchope fell and all the principal officers at the first volley, but the blaze of fire and the leaden storm continued without ceasing and in a few minutes hundreds of the flower of the Highland Brigade were lying dead or writhing in wounds, and the only matter for surprise is that the whole Brigade was not annihilated. That it was not is eloquent testimony of the nervous flurry and excitement of the Boers.

The Highlanders recoiled under the terrible fusilade and threw themselves flat on the ground to escape destruction. A number of them, however, managed to get into extended order and charged forward, getting past and over the Boer trenches and reached the foot of the hill, but finding themselves between the fire of the Boers on the hill and their own men behind them they were compelled to beat a retreat and pick their way in the darkness back to where the shattered Brigade lay.

This disaster effectually checked the Infantry advance. As soon as daylight dawned a terrific bombardment of the Boer trenches and the kopjes was begun by our full strength of Artillery. The positions were searched over and over again with shrapnel. The howitzer battery delivered lyddite shells wherever there seemed a chance of doing any damage. The effect of the lyddite was tremendous, smashing rocks, breaking up trenches and creating havoc and destruction wherever the shells fell.

A war balloon was kept in the air most of the time which overlooked the enemy's positions at the back of the kopjes and in accordance with directions from the look-out the Naval gun threw masses of lyddite wherever they would do the most good, and to the present day the ground at rear of the hill is strewn thickly with the bones of hundreds of horses, the effect of the naval pills. Any movement of men was similarly greeted with Naval shells and much loss was inflicted upon the Boers by this means. The Artillery practice was wonderfully accurate, two batteries took up a position just behind the prostrate Highlanders and though

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under a heavy rifle fire poured in a storm of shell upon the enemy's positions and must have had a considerable influence upon the casualties of the enemy.

On the right the Guards moved over the plain towards the hills, swinging round a little upon their left, and on the way enveloped a strong picket of some 80 or 90 Scandinavians. The Guards got into them with the bayonet, and only five escaped, most of the remainder being killed, though a few wounded were taken prisoners. The extreme right rested on the Modder river, and was held at a drift by the Yorkshire Light Infantry. The Boers here were very active, sending in long range rifle shots, and an attack was attempted by a large force of Boers who came on in skirmishing order and tried to get round our right flank, but the gallant Yorkshires extended some miles further to the right and stopped the attempt, pouring in a destructive fire which must have largely increased the number of Boer casualties.

The 18th battery Field Artillery and G Battery Royal Horse Artillery altered their front and bombarded the Boer left and supports, and compelled the enemy to retire, but the guns were worked for some hours under a severe rifle fire.

The action continued all day, the artillery delivering a destructive fire throughout over the men of the Highland Brigade who could not leave their exposed position and were compelled to lie out under a scorching sun, unable to move hand or foot without provoking volleys from the Boers in the trenches only a little over a hundred yards distant. Many of the men suffered severely from sunburn and the wounded suffered terribly. Later in the day the Gordons who had been in the rear, worked their way up to the front, each man creeping and crawling from stone to bush, taking advantage of every formation of the ground and kept up a galling fire upon the enemy.

The Boer guns were silent until towards evening when they opened with all guns upon the Highlanders who were forced to retire, leaving the Guards only in the front line.

The force encamped on the field of battle and the ambulance parties were at work all night bringing in the dead and wounded, and attending to the latter. General Wauchope's body was found in one of the enemy's trenches,

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and a number of bodies of our men were also found among the enemy.

THE RETIREMENT.

On Tuesday, the day following the battle, the whole force retired to Modder river camp. The artillery were escorted by the Guards Brigade in extended order and the other brigades followed, also in open order, under a terrific artillery fire from the Boers, during the passage across the open plain, but the order of march was not disturbed in the least by the heavy fire poured into them.

BRITISH CASUALTIES.

Highland Brigade.—*Killed*: Major-Gen. Wauchope. 2nd Black Watch: Lieut.-Col. Coode, Capt. Elton, Lieut. Edmonds. 2nd Seaforths: Capt J. Rutherfoord Clark, Lieut. Cox, 2nd Lieut. Cowie. 1st Highland Light Infantry: Capt. Cowan, Capt. Lambton. 1st Argyll and Sutherlands: Lieut-Col. Goff, Major Robinson. Gordons: Capt. Wingate. Total 12 officers.

Wounded:—West Riding Regiment: Capt. Macleod. 2nd Black Watch: Major Duff, Major Berkeley, Major Cuthbertson, Capt. Cameron, Lieuts. Wauchope, J. Harvey, St. J. Harvey, Berthon and Tate. 2nd Seaforths: Capt. Featherstonehaugh, Lieut. Stanley, 2nd Lieuts. Waterhouse, Hall, Wilson, Clive and Baillie. 1st Highland Light Infantry: Lieut.-Col. Kelham, Capts. Noyes, Wolfe Murray, and Richardson, 2nd Lieuts. A. J. Marten, Knight and Fraser. 1st Arygll and Sutherlands; Major Robinson, Capt. Campbell, Lieut. Graham, Lieut. Vaughan (1st York and Lancaster) 2nd Lieuts. King and Scott. Gordons: Lieut.-Col. Downman, Capts. Gordon and McNab, 2nd Lieut. Campbell. Total 34 officers.

Missing:—2nd Seaforths: Major K. R. Majenzie, Capts. Brodie, McFarlane, and Hon. Cumming Price, Lieut. Ramsay, 2nd Lieuts. Bullock, Drummond and Innes. Total eight officers.

Non-commissioned officers and men of Brigade, killed and wounded, 650.

Guards Brigade.—*Killed*: 1st Coldstreams: 5 rank and file. 2nd Coldstreams: Major Marquis of Winchester and one man. Total 1 officer, 6 rank and file.

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Wounded:—1st Coldstreams: Lieut.-Col. Codrington, Major Hon. W. Lambton, Capt. J. Sterling, 2nd Lieuts. Beckwith and Follett, and 25 rank and file. 2nd Coldstreams: 21 rank and file. Total 6 officers, 51 rank and file.

Missing:—One 2nd Coldstreams.

CAVALRY:—*Killed*: One 12th Lancer, one 9th Lancer. Total, two men.

Wounded:—Capt. Briggs, 1st Dragoon Guards, staff. 12th Lancers: 18 rank and file. 9th Lancers: 8 rank and file. Total, 1 officer, 26 rank and file.

MOUNTED INFANTRY.—*Killed*: Major Milton, 1st Yorkshire Light Infantry. Major Ray, Northumberlands.

Wounded:—Lieut.-Col. Bryon, Australian Artillery, Lieut. Cowie.

R.H.A.—*Wounded*: Lieut. Tudor and three men.

9TH BRIGADE.—8 men wounded, 2nd Yorks L.I.

R.A.M.C.—Lieut. Douglas, wounded. Major Burthchaell, prisoner.

ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY.—Wounded 21 men.

BRITISH CASUALTIES TABULATED.

	Killed. Off.	Killed. M.	Wounded. Off.	Wounded. M.	Missg. Off.	Missg. M.	Prisoners. Off.	Prisoners. M.	Total. Off.	Total. M.	
Staff	1		3		—		—		4		
2nd Black Watch ...	3		8		—		—		11		
2nd Seaforth Highlanders ...	3		7		8		—		18		
1st Highland Light Infantry	2		7		—		—		9		650
1st Argyll & S. Highlanders	2		5		—		—		7		
Gordon Highlanders ...	1		4		—		—		5		
1st Coldstream Guards ...		5	5	25	—		—		5		30
2nd Coldstream Guards ...	1			21		1	—		1		22
12th Lancers		1		18	—		—				19
9th Lancers		1		9	—		—				10
Mounted Infantry... ...	2		2		—		—		4		
Royal Horse Artillery ...			1	3	—		—		1		3
2nd Yorkshire Light Infantry				8	—		—				8
Royal Army Medical Corps...			1				1		2		
Royal Field Artillery ...				21							21
	15	7	43	105	8	1	1	0	67		763

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The above returns were published a few days after the fight and are not quite complete. The official returns published by the War Office are as follows:—Killed, 23 officers, 150 men; wounded, 45 officers, 645 men; died of wounds (included in wounded), 3 officers, 35 men; missing and prisoners, 108 men; total 68 officers, 903 men.

BOER LOSSES.

The Boer official reports as usual are extremely inconclusive in respect to their own losses. A report issued from Pretoria on 12th Dec. states that Delarey had four killed and 10 wounded, Potchefstroom commando 8 killed, 20 wounded. Ladybrand commando 2 killed 3 wounded. Hoopstad commando 4 dead 10 wounded, and at the end of the report roughly compute the Boer loss at 100 killed and wounded, as they knew nothing of the Scandinavians.

In the *Staats Courant* of the 20th December, appeared a list of 51 killed and 67 wounded at Magersfontein.

A prisoner taken by the British stated that 60 Boers were killed by one Lyddite shell. Another prisoner stated that two lyddite shells bursting among bodies of Boers committed great havoc, and all the prisoners agree that the Boer losses were terrible. Lord Methuen in his official report stated that according to prisoners and what Boers have said to our ambulance men their losses were terrible, some corps having been altogether wiped out, and there can be no doubt that their loss was very severe notwithstanding the small number of casualties officially reported.

BOER OFFICIAL REPORTS.

From official reports officially published in Klerksdorp, the following passages referring to Magersfontein are extracted:—

Pretoria, Dec. 12, 1899.

With reference to the battle near Modder river, yesterday, General Cronje reports as follows:—A heavy fight took place to-day which lasted from 3.45 a.m. to 3 p.m. After that time the fight slackened but shots were fired until 6 p.m. At this time heavy artillery fire re-commenced. All positions were retained. The enemy were repulsed several times and driven back. On our side no definite report of our casualties have been made, but I have

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heard from General Delarey's laager that four were killed and ten wounded; from Potchefstroom commando, 8 killed and 20 wounded; from Ladybrand commando, 2 dead and 3 wounded; from Hoopstad laager, 4 killed and about ten wounded. I cannot get any information of the Scandinavians, but they were in a very difficult and dangerous position, which the enemy stormed, and they had to retire, and being in a very bushy place no help could be afforded them, and I understand they lost heavily. I expect that the fight will be continued to-night and to-morrow. The enemy are in very great force. We have taken about 50 prisoners, and I believe that fully 2,000 of the enemy have been killed and wounded.

A report has been received from Commandant Fichardt of Jacobsdal yesterday evening, 10.25. He says that in reference to the foregoing report, the burghers had borne themselves very bravely. The fighting lasted all day, and while the report was being sent away desultory artillery fire was still going on. The enemy began the attack with heavy artillery fire which was maintained all the morning and at 1 o'clock was something terrific. The enemy sent forward time after time battalions of troops who were however, beaten back every time, and the burghers took every position. The Ficksburg burghers especially distinguished themselves and showed great bravery. There was no sign on our side of surrender or defeat, occasionally small bodies of our men went to the river to water their horses but they returned to the fight without any delay. Our cannons were used very seldom and I cannot praise our men sufficiently for their bravery in lying still in their trenches subject to such a terrible fire until the enemy got close enough for deadly rifle work, which took effect immediately. One of the prisoners informed us that the Black Watch had been almost obliterated, also that the troops had refused to press the attack because of the heavy fire of our men, though the officers did their best to urge them forward. It was observed that the enemy placed ambulance wagons in front of their artillery so that our burghers cannot be blamed if any damage was done to them. The enemy had a great advantage in their balloon, which did not, however work after 2 p.m. The ambulance of the enemy was very busy, I saw myself 24 wagons working

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between the fighting line and the enemy's camp. Our fire must have had terrible effect upon the enemy as we could see them flee in all directions. Our loss is not exactly known, but we reckon about 100 killed and wounded. The enemy's loss was certainly 2,000.

The telegraphist at Modder river wires that from 5.30 a.m. maxim and rifle fire was heard, and the fight is now proceeding with artillery and rifle fire. The same telegraphist wires 10 a.m. that artillery fire was getting heavier.

According to Fieldcornet Greyling the enemy fired upon the positions along the river held by the Wolmaransstad commando. A number of Scotch prisoners have just arrived in laager, and it is said that there are over 100 prisoners in the Bloemfontein laager all taken in yesterday's battle.

Pretoria, Dec. 13.

General Cronje reports that there was no fight yesterday, the enemy being busy burying the dead and attending to the wounded. About 11 a.m. a train advanced which was fired upon by our burghers and retired immediately, after which the enemy opened fire upon our positions with artillery. After about half an hour's bombardment, the enemy's fire was concentrated upon one of our guns, which was the cause of the report of the fight wired by our telegraphist, but no damage was done. Our artillery fired a few shots at the enemy whereupon they all fled back to their camp. Our burghers are still in their positions and in good spirits. The enemy has apparently received a terrible blow.

Further report from General Cronje :—Yesterday morning the enemy gathered their dead and have now all left the field. About a fifth of the dead have been removed, and it appears that the remainder are to be left. There are still lying on the field about 1,500 dead, and this number agrees with the account given us by doctors who have been on the field.

Capt. Trichardt reports further as follows :—Lieut Lynch just returned from the battlefield reports that the enemy have completely retired from the field with hundreds of baggage wagons. It was very likely their plan yesterday to go right through to Kimberley. Lynch says further that the counted 50 ambulance wagons busy near the British camp.

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Later reports from Fichardt state: The enemy fired a few shots from a big gun, but the majority of the cannon shots were fired by Major Albrecht at the northern side of the great camp of the enemy, until they fled, leaving their tents behind them. Despatch riders report that we have captured a great number of weapons from the enemy. The Kroonstad burghers alone captured 200 Lee-Metford rifles and two cases of ammunition, and many bandoliers with cartridges were found on the battlefield. Hundreds of bayonets were also found. The British dead are lying in heaps and walls. The enemy is retreating in great numbers from Twee river in the direction of Belmont. My opinion is that the enemy will break up his camp and the whole army will retire. We tried to count the British dead but had to give it up as a hopeless task. The British ambulance, perfect as it is, was unable to bury their dead or attend to their wounded. After our own wounded had been attended to our people assisted the British ambulances to the best of their ability, but the task is great and not yet finished. Thirty-one of our burghers, including the Scandinavians, were buried by the farm of Mr. Bisset, where also our wounded are temporarily cared for—there are only four there. Our loss in horses was very great. The sappers and miners have probably suffered severe loss, because many of their tools, etc., were found on the battlefield. Our people are calm and quiet and do not exult in the enemy's great loss, but they are determined not to let the enemy pass through them so long as any survive. I cannot describe the battle field as anything else but an awful slaughter place. One of the prisoners has informed us that as British reinforcements arrived at Twee river (Modder river) they were not permitted to speak to those who had taken part in the battles already fought, but were led past the British camp and told to march to Kimberley. It is evident that the officers did not wish the new troops to know how the other troops had been received in the former battle. It is also evident that the British did not know our positions and marched in among our men quite innocently. Yesterday's affair was not only a brilliant victory for our Boer army but a new spirit has been born into our men and they have gone through a school which will teach and impel them to perform even greater and

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braver deeds than they have performed in this great battle

OFFICIAL REPORT.

From the Lieutenant-General Commanding the 1st Division, to the Chief Staff Officer.

Modder River Camp,

February 15, 1900.

Sir,

1. I have the honour to inform you that any further advance by the railway was out of the question, owing to the large kopjes on either side which had been strongly entrenched. Besides, there was not sufficient water by that route to Kimberley.

2. Anticipating my possible advance along the Modder River, the enemy had entrenched a very strong position running north-west.

3. The northern portion of the position consists of a kopje about three miles long, the southern end terminating in a high hill which is the key of the position. From the south end of this kopje, an underfeature, covered with low bush, extends about 5 miles to the Modder River. This portion of the position was also entrenched.

4. So long as this kopje, named Majesfontein, remained in possession of the enemy, I did not feel justified with my small force in marching up the Modder River, for my line of communication would have been in danger, and my transport could only carry five days' provisions. Had I marched round by Jacobsdal to Brown's Drift, I should have had to fight my way across the river in the face of a mobile force consisting of 16,000 men.

5. Had I elected to fight my way through the bushy ground with small slope between Majesfontein and the Modder River, I should have incurred very heavy loss, and in addition to the guns not being able to render me very great assistance, they would run a good chance of being captured.

6. In any case I had to be prepared for a second heavy action at Spytfontein, and a blow dealt to the enemy's centre at Matjesfontein would render any future fight at Spytfontein easier than any success on their left flank could have done.

7. The reconnaissance work had been very difficult on account of the large amount of wire between the two rivers, whilst on the north side of the Modder, owing to the enemy's entrenchments, the Cavalry had not been able to advance any great distance.

8. My orders were to relieve Kimberley, and the longer I remained inactive the stronger the enemy would become in my front.

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Therefore, on the day my last reinforcement arrived I decided to continue my advance to Kimberley, and attack the Majesfontein Kopje.

9. With this purpose I gave orders for the kopje to be bombarded from 4·50 p.m. to 6·40 p.m. on the 10th December with all my guns, including the naval 4·7 inch.

10. At daybreak on 11th December the southern end of the kopje was to be assaulted by the Highland Brigade, supported by all the guns, the right and rear being protected by the Guards Brigade.

11. Judging from the moral effect produced by the guns in my previous actions, and the additional anticipated effect of lyddite, I expected great destruction of life in the trenches, and a considerable demoralizing effect on the enemy's nerves, thereby indirectly assisting the attack at daybreak.

12. In accordance with the orders issued, of which I attach a copy, the Artillery on the 10th fired with accuracy and effect on the kopje, and the trenches at the foot from 4·30 p.m. to 6·45 p.m.

13. The night march was ordered for 12·30 a.m., the bearings and distance having been ascertained at great personal risk by Major Benson, Royal Artillery, my Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General (A). The distance is 2½ miles, and daybreak was due at 3·25 a.m.

14. About half an hour after the Highland Brigade marched off it came on to pour, a heavy thunderstorm accompanying the rain. The downpour lasted until daybreak.

15. The Brigade was led with perfect accuracy to the point of assault by Major Benson. The advance was slow, even for a night march. Major Benson, with a compass in each hand, had frequently to halt on account of the lightning and rifles affecting the compasses.

16. I may remark that two rifles went off by accident before the march commenced, and it is pretty clear that flashes from a lantern gave the enemy timely notice of the march.

17. Before moving off, Major-General Wauchope explained all he intended to do and the particular part each battalion of his brigade was to play in the scheme. Namely, that he intended to march direct on the south-west spur of the kopje, and on arrival near the objective before daybreak the Black Watch were to move to the east of the kopje, where he believed the enemy to be posted under shelter, whilst the Seaforth Highlanders were to march straight to the south-east point of the kopje, with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders prolonging the line to the left; the Highland Infantry to be in reserve until the action was developed.

The Brigade was to march in mass of quarter columns, the four

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battalions keeping touch, and if necessary ropes were to be used for the left guides; these ropes were taken, but I believe used by only two battalions. The three battalions were to extend just before daybreak, two companies in firing line, two companies in support, and four companies in reserve, all at five paces interval between them.

18. What happened was as follows:—Not finding any signs of the enemy on the right flank just before daybreak, which took place at 4 a.m., as the Brigade was approaching the foot of the kopje, Major-General Wauchope gave the order for the Black Watch to extend but to direct its advance on the spur in front, the Seaforth Highlanders to prolong to the left, the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders to prolong to the right, the Highland Light Infantry in reserve. Five minutes earlier (the kopje looming in the distance), Major Benson had asked Major-General Wauchope if he did not think it to be time to deploy. Lieut.-Col. Hughes-Hallett states that the extension could have taken place 200 yards sooner, but the leading battalion got thrown into confusion in the dark by a very thick bit of bush about 20 to 30 yards long. The Seaforth Highlanders went round this bush to the right, and had just got into its original position behind the Black Watch when the order to extend was given by Major-General Wauchope to the Black Watch. The Seaforth Highlanders and two companies of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders were also moving out, and were in the act of extending when suddenly a heavy fire was poured in by the enemy, most of the bullets going over the men.

Lieut.-Col. Hughes-Hallett at once ordered the Seaforths to fix bayonets and charge the position.

The Officers commanding the other battalions acted in a similar manner. At this moment someone gave the word "Retire." Part of the Black Watch then rushed back through the ranks of the Seaforths. Lieut.-Col. Hallett ordered his men to halt and lie down, and not to retire. It was now becoming quite light, and some of the Black Watch were a little in front, to the left of the Seaforths.

19. The Artillery, advancing to the support of the attack, had opened fire from the time it was light enough to see.

20. No orders having been received by the Seaforths, the Commanding Officer advanced the leading units to try and reach the trenches, which were about 400 yards off; but the Officers and about half the men fell before a very heavy fire, which opened as soon as the men moved. About ten minutes later the Seaforths tried another rush, with the same result. Col. Hughes-Hallett then considered it best to remain where he was till orders came.

21. Meanwhile the 9th Lancers, the 12th Lancers, "G"

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Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, and Mounted Infantry were working on the right flank.

22. At 12 midnight on the 10th the 12th Lancers and Guards marched from camp, the former to join the Cavalry Brigade, the latter to protect the rear and right of the Highland Brigade. Considering the night, it does Major-General Sir Henry Colville immense credit that he carried out his orders to the letter, as did Major-General Babington.

23. A heavy fire was maintained the whole morning. The Guards Brigade held a front of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles. The Yorkshire Light Infantry protected my right flank with five companies, three companies being left at a drift.

24. Captain Jones, Royal Engineers, and Lieutenant Grubb were with the Balloon section, and gave me valuable information during the day. I learnt from this source, at about 12 noon, that the enemy was receiving large reinforcements from Abutsdam and Spytfontein.

25. The enemy held their own on this part of the field, for the underfeature was strongly entrenched, concealed by small bushes, and on slight undulations.

26. At 12 noon, I ordered the battalion of "Gordons," which was the supply column, to support the Highland Brigade. The trenches, even after the bombardment by lyddite and shrapnel since daybreak, were too strongly held to be cleared.

27. The "Gordons" advanced in separate half battalions, and though the attack could not be carried home, the battalion did splendid work throughout the day.

28. At 1 p.m., the Seaforth Highlanders found themselves exposed to a heavy crossfire, the enemy trying to get round to the right. The Commanding Officer brought his left forward. An order to "Retire" was given, and it was at this time that the greater part of the casualties occurred. The retirement continued for 500 yards, and the "Highlanders" remained there till dusk. Lieut.-Col. Downman, commanding Gordons, gave the order to retire, because he found his position untenable, so soon as the Seaforth Highlanders made the turning movement to the right.

29. This was an unfortunate retirement, for Lieut.-Col. Hughes-Hallett had received instructions from me to remain in position until dusk, and the enemy were at this time quitting the trenches by tens and twenties.

30. I have made use of Lieut.-Col. Hughes-Hallett's reports (the acting Brigadier) for the description of the part the Highland Brigade took in this action.

31. Major-General Wauchope told me, when I asked him the question, on the evening of the 10th, that he quite understood his

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orders, and made no further remark. He died at the head of the Brigade, in which his name will always remain honoured and respected. His high military reputation and attainments disarm all criticism. Every soldier in my Division deplores the loss of a fine soldier, and a true comrade.

32. The attack failed: the inclement weather was against success; the men in the Highland Brigade were ready enough to rally, but the paucity of Officers and non-commissioned officers rendered this no easy matter. I attach no blame to this splendid brigade. From noon until dark I held my own opposite to the enemy's entrenchments.

33. "G" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, fired hard till dark, expending nearly 200 rounds per gun.

34. Nothing could exceed the conduct of the troops from the time of the failure of the attack at daybreak. There was not the slightest confusion, though the fight was carried on under as hard conditions as one can imagine, for the men had been on the move from midnight, and were suffering terribly from thirst. At 7·15 p.m. fighting ceased, the Highland Brigade formed up under cover, the Guards Brigade held my front, the Yorkshire Light Infantry secured my right flank, the Cavalry and guns were drawn in to behind the Infantry.

35. The men carried half ration, they had half ration given them from the supply Column, and they had a lot of rum served out, as well as a good supply of water.

36. I decided that if I found the trenches vacated in the morning I would advance to Brown's Drift, occupying the Magersfontein kopje; if, on the contrary, the entrenchments were still occupied, I would retire slowly to this place. The wounded I sent during the night to the rear, and also the Supply Column.

37. In the morning I found the trenches still occupied, and although Major-General Sir H. Colvile expressed his opinion that it would be advisable to hold on, I found, after going over the position with the senior Officers of my force, there was a concurrence of opinion that my judgment was sound and a retirement advisable.

38. I retired in excellent order at 12 noon, Sir H. Colville, with the Guards, Cavalry, and Artillery, covering the retirement. About 300 of the "Gordons" volunteered to act as stretcher bearers to carry back the wounded to camp. There were only two casualties during the retirement.

39. I have to express my appreciation of the clear orders given out, and the careful arrangements made by Col. Douglas, A.D.C., my Chief Staff Officer, for the attack.

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Major-General Sir Henry Colvile showed coolness and judgment throughout two trying days.

The same remark applies to Major-General Babington.

I again recognize the business-like manner in which Lieut.-Col. Hall, Commanding Royal Artillery, carries out his duties in the field.

Major Bannatino Allason performed splendid work, and assisted greatly in checking the enemy on the right of our attack.

Lieut. Cuthbert, Scots Guards, my extra Aide-de-Camp, showed considerable coolness in taking a message from me to the Gordon Highlanders. A volley was fired at him, killing his horse; he took off all wallets and saddle and returned, letting me learn from others how he had behaved.

Major Milton, Commanding Mounted Infantry, behaved gallantly and was shot three times before he died; he was making a successful effort to rally some men of the Highland Brigade.

Lieut.-Col. the Earl of Airlie did excellent work with two dismounted squadrons, when good service was much needed.

Major Little, in the firing line, did good work all day.

Lieut. Allhusen, 9th Lancers, and Lieut. Macnaghten, 12th Lancers, did good work with their Maxims.

Major Maberly, Royal Horse Artillery, acting galloper to Major-General Babington, after rallying 30 or 40 men of different regiments, was severely wounded.

Major O'Donnell, Royal Army Medical Corps, and Lieut. Delap, Royal Army Medical Corps, were indefatigable in attending wounded under fire.

Lieut.-Col. Codrington, Officer Commanding Coldstream Guards, though wounded, insisted on remaining in command of his battalion till nightfall.

Major the Honourable W. Lambton, Coldstream Guards, refused to be carried because the bearers were exposed to fire. He remained on the ground 37 hours without food or water.

Captain the Master of Ruthven, Scots Guards, performed, as on several other occasions, valuable services.

Major the Marquis of Winchester was killed whilst displaying almost reckless courage.

Sergeant Wilkinson, 2nd Battalion Coldstreams Guards, showed great courage in collecting ammunition. Corporal Bartlet, 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards, under a very heavy fire, went 1000 yards to get a stretcher for Major Milton. Corporal Webb, 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards, showed great courage in taking messages.

Corporal Munro, of the Black Watch, and Lieut. Hore-Ruthven

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of the Black Watch, carried the Marquis of Winchester out of action after he was hit.

The Brigade Major, Captain Ruggles-Brise, and the Aide-de-Camp of Sir H. Colville's Staff, again earn honourable mention, not only in delivering orders, but also for their clear and accurate description of the position.

Captain A. Campbell, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, displayed great coolness throughout the day, and helped to dress the wounds of Captain Gordon under a hot fire.

Lance-Corporal Ray, No. 6766, and Private Phipps, No. 3724, specially mentioned by Major-General Babington as having helped him to rally men and taking them into the firing line.

Highland Light Infantry.

Major Garland performed good service throughout the day.

Major the Honourable H. Anson performed good service throughout the day.

Captain Richardson and Captain Wolfe Murray, were wounded but remained in the front with their companies.

Captain and Adjutant Cowan, D.S.O., gallantly led and rallied his men, and was killed at close quarters.

Sergeant-Major Stevens rallied men.

No. 4050 Sergeant McDonald, gallant behaviour specially brought to notice for carrying messages to the guns, and to Medical Officer under heavy fire.

No. 4896 Lance-Corporal Fraser, No. 4653 Sergeant Piper Ross, and No. 4741 Piper McLellan specially brought to notice for their cheery conduct under fire and helping to rally men.

No. 3113 Corporal Shaul brought to notice for several specific cases of bravery when in charge of the stretcher bearers of the battalion.

No. 3269 Private Peat, No. 3426 Private Richmond, and No. 1674 Private Stewart, excellent service and setting good example to their comrades.

Gordon Highlanders.

Captain E. B. Towse recommended for special reward by his Commanding Officer for his gallantry and devotion in assisting the late Col. Downman when mortally wounded in the retirement, and when close up to the front of the firing line. He endeavoured to carry Col. Downman on his back, but finding this not possible supported him till joined by Colour-Sergeant Nelson and Lance-Corporal Hodgson. The conduct of these non-commissioned officers is described as admirable.

Seaforth Highlanders.

Captain the Honourable Forbes Sempill, conspicuous and

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gallant manner in which he rallied and led his men straight up to the front.

Lieut. Grant did good service taking messages to the front from Col. Hughes-Hallett under a heavy fire.

Lieut. Lindsay, very gallant and conspicuous behaviour when in charge of the Maxim gun.

Band Sergeant Hoare, conspicuous for his coolness and gallantry during the day in helping Dr. Ensor to succour wounded. Personally carried Captain Featherstonhaugh (wounded) on his back some 800 yards to the dressing station.

Black Watch

Lieut. Douglas, Royal Army Medical Corps, showed great gallantry and devotion, under a very severe fire, in advancing in the open and attending to Captain Gordon (Gordon Highlanders), who was wounded; also attending to Major Robinson and other wounded men under a fearful fire.

Corporal Gayner, Black Watch, rallying men, and by his example encouraging his comrades.

Private A. Bettington, Cape Mounted Rifles, attached to Cape Medical Corps, and Private Johnson, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, were instrumental in removing a wounded Highlander from the front under a heavy fire.

The complete list of the men and Officers considered worthy of special mention in the Black Watch I have not yet been able to obtain. I would add that I left Major-General Pole-Carew, C.B., at Modder River Camp with the 9th Brigade, minus the battalion of Yorkshire Light Infantry; he has also Rimington's Guides, and the Naval 4·7-inch. He carried out his orders quite correctly, making a diversion against Majersfontein Ridge along the railway.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

METHUEN, Lieutenant-General,

Commanding 1st Division.

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"CONTAINING" CRONJE.

AFTER Magersfontein, there was a long and weary wait for reinforcements, it being evident that the forces in the field were not sufficient to cope with the large commandoes of Boers, posted in such strong natural fortresses. The business of Lord Methuen's division was, therefore, to contain the Boer force before Kimberley, and prevent a further invasion of the Colony. The work was somewhat monotonous, and required the utmost care, and constant watchfulness, but it was successfully accomplished.

On the morning of the 15th December, the 9th Brigade and Grenadier Guards, under General Pole-Carew, accompanied by a detachment of the 12th Lancers, moved out towards the Boer position, supported by five naval guns, and a howitzer and field battery. The artillery searched the ridges and kopjes, the enemy replying with two guns. No casualties occurred on our side, though the Boer guns were well served, and made excellent practice.

The Boer official account of this little demonstration is as follows:—

General Cronje reports that the English troops advanced towards our lines this morning with their guns and fired on our positions for about an hour and a half, but when one of our guns returned the fire they desisted and returned to camp. Later on, we threw a few shells among their tents with good effect. The enemy also sent out a cavalry force, evidently with the object of proceeding to the west of our position, but a mounted commando was sent out to turn them, and the enemy retired. Judging from the way the soldiers have to be driven into the fight, it would seem that the enemy are considerably scared after the recent engagements.

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Almost daily, artillery fire was exchanged with the enemy, but the range was too long to be effective, and the result was merely to relieve the monotony of camp life and worry the enemy.

On Christmas Day, a general parade was held, and a message from Her Majesty the Queen read, which was enthusiastically received.

On the 26th December another reconnaissance in force was made by mounted troops and artillery which drew the fire of seven Boer guns, one of them a 40 pounder. The Boer fire wounded three horses of the 12th Lancers but did no further damage.

These operations undoubtedly kept the Boers on the alert and made them very nervous, as on several occasions, without any provocation on the part of the British, the whole face of the Boer position was illuminated by incessant discharges of rifles and machine guns, and also artillery, lasting for half an hour, our outposts at the time being fully 5000 yards distant from them. The Boers evidently entertained a wholesome dread of a night attack.

On the afternoon of Dec. 27th the Boers opened fire with four guns against one of the naval 4.7 guns, which did not reply for a time, allowing the Boer guns to blaze away for fully an hour, when it began throwing lyddite into the enemy's positions until dark. Before night fell three naval guns were trained on to the enemy's positions and late in the night they were fired, the shells bursting just on the top ridge of the stronghold. The Boers undoubtedly thought this salute was the prelude to an infantry attack, and opened fire with their rifles, the hills being ablaze with fire for some time. Later the Boers again opened a tremendous rifle fire, but as the British were some three miles distant no damage was done.

THE SUNNYSIDE CAPTURE.

On the 1st January a mounted force, consisting of Queenslanders and Toronto men moved from Belmont in the direction of Koodoosberg Drift. Precautions were taken to prevent notice of the movement being communicated to the enemy, and the result was a complete surprise

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for the enemy, whose laager at Sunnyside was captured, with forty prisoners and a large quantity of ammunition, rifles, supplies, and equipment. The Boers lost six killed, and ten or twelve wounded. The British casualties were: Troopers Victor Jones and Macleod (Queenslanders) killed, and Lieut. Adie, also of the Queenslanders, dangerously wounded. Lieut.-Colonel Pilcher commanded the operations.

INVASION OF THE FREE STATE.

The first British troops to enter the Free State was a cavalry force under General Babington which crossed near Honeynest kloof and moved twelve miles across the border to Ramdam, returning in the afternoon to Enslin. The force consisted of the 9th and 12th Lancers, G battery R.H.A. and detachment of Victorians and Queenslanders.

KOODOOSBERG DRIFT.

Lord Roberts arrived at Capetown early in January and took command of the British forces in South Africa. Bodies of the enemy having been reported to the west of the railway line at Modder river a portion of General Lord Methuen's force consisting of the Highland brigade, two squadrons of the 9th Lancers, 62nd battery Field Artillery and No 7 Field company Royal Engineers under General Hector Macdonald was sent on the 4th of February to Koodoosberg drift, lower down the river, as a sort of diversion. The drift is about 17 miles from Modder river camp, and the force reached it on the afternoon of the next day. The following day a redoubt was commenced on the north side of the river close to the drift. The enemy held a kopje in strength some distance to the north. The Boers had placed a gun on the kopje and opened fire on the redoubt in course of construction. Fighting ensued, a portion of the kopje being occupied by the British, but nothing definite was accomplished. The only casualty on our side was one Lancer killed. Reinforcements under General Babington arrived on the 7th, and the enemy retired next morning. The British force returned to camp at Modder river on Friday.

The enemy's official account is as follows:—

With reference to the fight at Koodoosberg General Cronje

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wires that everything ended satisfactorily for us, and enemy was prevented from reaching Kimberley along that road. Our men kept their positions well, in spite of the enemy's continued reinforcements. Our losses trivial, while enemy's must have been serious.

KIMBERLEY.

The concentration of Lord Roberts' force began early in February, and General French struck east into the Free State with a large mounted force, making a wide detour and arriving in Kimberley on the 14th. This movement made the positions of the enemy opposing Lord Methuen's division quite untenable. On the 17th the Guards reconnoitred towards Magersfontein, and discovered that the enemy had evacuated their strongholds, and were retreating rapidly towards Bloemfontein, pursued by the British. The Guards brigade was ordered to join in the chase, and they were well in at the finish at Paardeberg.

Lord Methuen was then ordered to proceed to Kimberley, restore the railway line, arrange for the military control of the town, and take steps with a view to open communications with Mafeking. His head-quarters were accordingly moved to Kimberley, the troops at his disposal being as follows:—1000 Imperial Yeomanry, 20th and 38th batteries R.F.A., one battery New South Wales artillery, the 9th Brigade, and a second Infantry Brigade consisting of the 1st Highland Light Infantry and three Militia battalions to arrive in the Colony about the 10th March.

The Modder river railway bridge was guarded by a battalion of infantry, well entrenched, and other important points were also strongly garrisoned. Railway communication with Kimberley was re-opened on the 18th Feb., four days after General French relieved that town with his cavalry force.

BOSHOF.

A column under Lord Methuen went out from Kimberley and occupied Boshof on the 12th March, without firing a shot. A garrison under Col. Barter was left there and the General, with the remainder of the force, returned to Kimberley.

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WARRENTON AND FOURTEEN STREAMS.

On the 16th March, a reconnaisance was made north from Kimberley, which was extended as far as Fourteen Streams. Barkly West was also visited, and the railway line to Warrenton repaired. A garrison was stationed at this place, and the district around Kimberley diligently patrolled.

On the 28th March Warrenton was attacked by the Boers in force, and heavy fighting ensued. The enemy's firing line extended a mile and a half, and they brought a 40-pounder into action against our 12-pounders. The troops in camp consisted of Royal Field Artillery, detachments of Royal Engineers and Northumberland Fusiliers, under Major Blewitt, Col. Money and Capt. Williams respectively, and a detachment of Kimberley Light Horse under Capt. Richman, and were posted about a mile from the village, but notwithstanding this fact, the Boers raked the place with rifle fire from end to end, and the residents had many narrow escapes. Three men were wounded on our side, one each of the Engineers, Artillery, and Northumberland Fusiliers.

TWEEFONTEIN.

A portion of Lord Methuen's division, consisting of three squadrons of the Kimberley Mounted Corps under Lieut.-Col. Peakman, three companies of Imperial Yeomanry, and the 4th battery R.F.A., the whole under the command of Lord Chesham, went out of Boshof on the 5th April, and found a small Boer commando on a kopje some ten miles distant, on the Jacobsdal road. The position was entirely surrounded by Lord Chesham's force, and by careful skirmishing, and utilising every bit of cover, they crept close to the hill, and then charged with the bayonet, accounting for every man of the party.

The commander of the Boers was a Frenchman, Colonel de Villebois Mareuil, and many of the party were Frenchmen. There were seven of the enemy killed, including the Colonel, eleven wounded, and 51 prisoners taken, and the whole camp equipment captured. Our casualties were: Killed, Capt. Boyle, Oxfordshire Yeomanry: Lieut. Cecil

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Williams, Lincolnshire Yeomanry; Sergt. Patrick Campbell, husband of the celebrated actress, and ten wounded.

The following is Lord Methuen's official despatch concerning this affair:—

Boshof, 6th April, 1900.

SIR,—News arrived at 10.30 a.m. yesterday that a Boer commando 300 strong, had passed through Tweefontein, south of Boshof, and about 5 miles off. They had again saddled up and made for a ridge about 2½ miles north of Tweefontein and again off-saddled. This commando was there at 9 a.m. when the natives left. My horses were grazing when the information came, and some distance away. I ordered the Imperial Yeomanry, 500 strong, under Brigadier-General Lord Chesham, the Kimberley Mounted Corps, 250 strong, under Lt.-Colonel Peakman, and the 4th Field Artillery Battery under Major Butcher, to saddle up at once. At 11.50 a.m. the force marched, the Kimberley Mounted Corps under Lieut.-Col. Peakman leading, and followed by the Imperial Yeomanry under Brigadier General Lord Chesham. No. 4 battery under Major Butcher, and one company of Imperial Yeomanry as escort brought up the rear. The natives, who knew the position of the enemy, led the column in a south south-easterly direction, keeping the column concealed until it reached a knoll, when the position was reconnoitred, but with no result. A native stated that they still occupied a kopje 2,500 yards in front. The Kimberley Mounted Corps pushed on to the right flank and front, followed by the Imperial Yeomanry and the battery. One company of the Imperial Yeomanry moved to the left front with the object of cutting off the enemy should they attempt to escape in that direction. Two Colonial Scouts, attached to the Imperial Yeomanry brought back the first reliable information regarding the enemy's position. The column reached some small kopjes in front, and a few of the enemy were located, occupying some low kopjes about 1200 yards distant.

The position occupied by the enemy was composed of a few small low kopjes in the centre of a large flat plain. I completely surrounded the kopjes before taking any further action. The guns were kept under shelter, having no target. I ordered the Imperial Yeomanry and the Kimberley Mounted Corps to attack the kopje from the east, supporting the attack from the south-east and north. The order was intelligently carried out, care being taken to advance very slowly, taking all advantage of the fine cover given by the bushes and boulders.

The enemy made a fine resistance from 2 p.m. till nearly 6 p.m., not surrendering until our troops, with bayonets fixed, were 15 yards from them. They sent to my aide-de-camp to say they intended to fight to the end, and they only changed their minds when General de Villebois Mareuil was killed by a shell. The guns found difficulty in firing without endangering our men's lives, but at last the battery, firing three shells, helped materially towards closing the defence. The enemy had 7 killed, 11 wounded, and 51 prisoners. I regret the loss of Lieutenants C. Boyle and A. C. Williams, Imperial Yeomanry; 10

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men wounded. Lieut. Williams was killed deliberately, after the white flag was held up. The man who fired was at once shot by my order.

This was the first time the Imperial Yeomanry and the Kimberley Mounted Corps have been engaged with the enemy, and I was much struck by the intelligent manner in which they carried out the attack, and made use of cover. Had they not done so, the list of casualties would have been far greater. I draw attention to the careful manner in which Brigadier-General Lord Chesham, Lieut.-Colonel Peakman, and Major Butcher executed my orders.

I am, &c.,

METHUEN, Lieut.-General,
Commanding 1st Division.

The French Colonel was buried in the Boshof cemetery, with full military honours, by the side of our fallen officers.

ZWARTKOPPIESFONTEIN.

The field force moved from Boshof to Zwartkoppiesfontein which was occupied without resistance. On the morning of the 20th April orders were given for the force to move back to Boshof, and at about midday the convoy, some six miles in length, moved out of camp. Three squadrons of the Kimberley Mounted Corps, consisting of Cape Police and D. F. Horse with a party of Yorkshire Hussars protected the rear, holding a cluster of kopjes through which the column had to pass, until it had travelled some three miles across the flat. The enemy came into action some 2000 strong with two guns and one pom-pom. The British rearguard opened an accurate fire upon the enemy as they advanced, driving them back, but they came on again and were again driven off, but immediately the British left the kopjes the enemy occupied them, pouring a heavy fire upon our men as they retired across the plain. Our casualties in killed, wounded and prisoners, numbered twenty-five. Several men whose horses were shot fell into the enemy's hands. They did not, however, follow up the column, which reached Boshof without further incident.

A reconnaisance in force was made by Lord Methuen from Boshof on the 3rd May, his force consisting of a battery of R.F.A. two battalions of infantry, and two regiments of Imperial Yeomanry. The force marched to

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Beck's farm in the direction of Zwartkoppiesfontein. A few shots were exchanged with the enemy and the force returned to Boshof.

TRANS-VAAL SHELLING.

Meanwhile desultory fighting continued at Warrenton, resulting in the enemy being driven out of Fourteen Streams and the formation of a British camp on the north side of the river.

Serious operations were begun against the enemy in the neighbourhood of Warrenton and Fourteen Streams in May, General Barton's brigade beginning operations at Windsorton, General Hunter accompanying the brigade. He crossed the Vaal at Windsorton, and on the 3rd began shelling the enemy using among other resources and persuasions of civilisation a 6 inch wire gun, throwing a 100 lb. shell into a Boer laager at a distance of 7½ miles, completely astounding and demoralising the enemy, dispersing three laagers and making splendid practice. On the 4th the 6 inch gun, which was christened "Bobs," began shelling a laager 6½ miles north east of the Warrenton bridge well in the Transvaal Republic, and these were the first shells dropped into the Republic during the war.

ROOI DAM.

During the advance of General Barton's force up the Vaal river towards Fourteen Streams the Boers to the number of 2000 or 3000 made a determined stand in some broken ground several miles in extent, near Rooidam. A severe engagement ensued which lasted some eight hours. After the positions had been thoroughly searched with artillery fire, the infantry advanced to the attack, the 2nd Royal Fusiliers and the 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers suffering rather severely. The enemy were driven out of their positions and pursued for some miles by the Yeomanry under Colonel Meyrick. They left thirteen of their dead unburied and we captured a number of prisoners. The enemy were commanded by Gen. Andries Cronje, brother of Gen. Piet Cronje.

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The British casualties were:

Killed:—2nd Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 2 rank and file; 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers, Capt. B. G. B. Lovett and 4 rank and file; 5th Imperial Yeomanry, 1 man

Wounded:—Staff, Capt. M. R. McMahon A.D.C. severely; 2nd Royal Dublin Fusiliers, 10 rank and file severely, 4 rank and file slightly; 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers, Capt. P. R. Mantell, Capt. and Adjutant W. G. Braithwaite, severely, 2 men dangerously, (since dead) 2 non-coms dangerously, 10 rank and file, severely, 3 rank and file, slightly; 2nd Royal Irish Fusiliers, 1 man, slightly; 5th Imperial Yeomanry, 1 non-com, dangerously, 1 man severely, 2 men slightly.

Missing:—5th Imperial Yeomanry, 2 rank and file.

BACKING UP MAFEKING RELIEF COLUMN.

General Paget began an attack on the enemy's positions at Warrenton on the 6th which resulted in the complete evacuation of the strongholds in that vicinity. These positions were found to be very strong and made additionally so by skilfully constructed trenches.

The next day General Paget joined General Barton and formed part of General Hunter's division, which a few days afterwards pushed forward and occupied Christiana, the enemy falling back in disorder and making for Klerksdorp, where the General, Andries Cronje, resided.

Vryburg was occupied by General Hunter's force on the 23rd May. The march was a forced one and done in remarkably quick time. The infantry consisted of the Scots, Irish, Welsh and Royal Fusiliers. Railway communication with Kimberley was re-established, the repair of the railway bridge at Fourteen Streams was begun, and a strong post entrenched and occupied by a battalion of infantry. The enemy appeared to be losing heart and courage, and cleared out of that part of the country.

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CAPTURE OF HOOPSTAD.

ON Monday, the 14th May, Lord Methuen's column moved out of Boshof, on the line of march. On the 16th, after a march of twelve miles in the forenoon, Lord Methuen decided to effect the capture of Hoopstad. To accomplish this a night march of nineteen miles was made, and he was thus enabled to surprise the town which resulted in the surrender of the landdrost, Generals Daniels and du Preez and forty Boers, and the capture of a considerable number of rifles and a quantity of ammunition.

Lord Roberts had originally intended Lord Methuen's force to take part in the advance into the Transvaal, but this arrangement was modified in consequence of anticipated disturbances in the rear of the advancing columns, and the destination was altered to Kroonstad. Although not actually engaged as a part of the Field Marshal's advancing army, its presence on the left flank no doubt contributed to the success of the advance.

Passing through Bothaville the division reached Kroonstad on the 28th May, where instructions were received to proceed at once to the relief of the Highland brigade, which was in a tight fix at Heilbron, 55 miles north east of Kroonstad.

ATTEMPTED RELIEF OF IRISH YEOMANRY.

The column left on the 30th May and after travelling about 10 miles in that direction Lord Methuen received a message from Colonel Spragge, commanding the Irish Yeomanry, who were besieged and in a bad way at Lindley, 25 miles south east of Kroonstad, asking for speedy relief. The message was dated the same day, and stated that he was heavily pressed by the enemy, and was short of food and ammunition, and could hold out until the 2nd

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of June. After repeating this message to Lord Roberts at Pretoria, instructions were received to alter the route and relieve Colonel Spragge's force. Half an hour after receiving his chief's instructions Lord Methuen went on in advance with his mounted troops, Imperial Yeomanry, a Field battery, and pom-poms, and reached Lindley early in the morning of the 2nd June, after having covered 44 miles in 24 hours. The remainder of the column arrived at 10 o'clock the same morning.

Before entering Lindley the force encountered De Wet's commando which had increased to 3000 men, and without delaying his march kept up a running fight for five hours, defeating and dispersing the Boers, but the strenuous and heroic efforts were all in vain, as it was found that Colonel Spragge had surrendered two days before.

RELIEF OF HIGHLAND BRIGADE.

Paget's Infantry brigade was left at Lindley, and the march to Heilbron was then resumed with mounted troops, Artillery, Douglas' Infantry brigade, and a convoy of supplies for the relief of General Colville and the Highland brigade, who were practically besieged at that place. After a three days march, fighting every inch of the way, Heilbron was reached, and the much needed supplies brought in to the half starved garrison.

PROTECTING THE RAILWAY.

On the 9th June the column, to which had been added the Black Watch, left Heilbron and the same afternoon had a brush with the enemy, capturing a number of prisoners, mostly Italians.

At about this time de Wet was committing serious depredations along the railway line in the Free State, and Lord Roberts took steps to establish new and strengthen the old garrisons along the line, Lord Methuen being entrusted with the work.

On Monday, the 11th June the column came in sight of the railway, in time to see several explosions, but too late to prevent them. Lord Kitchener was passed on the way, who had come from Pretoria in reference to the same matter. Having arrived at the railway line the column

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proceeded south, and hearing that de Wet was in position at Rhenoster Spruit, Lord Methuen decided to attack him.

After a vigorous shelling of the position by the artillery the infantry advanced. The firing line consisted of half battalions of the Black Watch, Loyal North Lancashire and Northamptonshire regiments, the remaining half battalions acting as supports. After some four or five hours hard fighting the position was carried, the Loyal North Lancashires taking six prisoners after storming a kopje. As soon as our stormers had charged to within a few yards of the enemy, those who had been unable to get away promptly hoisted a white flag, which they had got in readiness beforehand, the flag being nailed on a stick. The greater number galloped away, and the horses of the mounted men being exhausted, the success could not be completed and the affair was therefore not such a thorough business as the general's spirited action merited.

Lord Methuen's force at this time consisted of four battalions of Imperial Yeomanry, about 1000 strong, two Field batteries, two 5 inch howitzers, two infantry battalions from the 9th brigade, (the Northamptons and Loyal North Lancashires) a provisional battalion of infantry details, two pom-poms, and ten machine guns. This force was stationed in the neighbourhood of Paardekraal, ten miles south east of Heilbron on the Kroonstad road, and its business was to protect the railway between Kroonstad and the Vaal river, and prevent de Wet from breaking westward. This duty entailed a prodigious amount of marching from one point to another. In addition to this task convoys were escorted into both Heilbron and Lindley.

Lord Methuen reported on the 20th June from Paardekraal that he had captured 8000 sheep and 800 head of cattle, and that the enemy had cleared eastwards.

On the 2nd of July, he arrested Andries Wessels, a prominent member of the Africander Bond, at Welgelegen, and the next day, near Paardekraal, captured 6000 sheep and 500 cattle.

Some prominent Free State officials surrendered at Heilbron on the 8th July, viz., Mr. Blignaut, State Secretary; Mr. Dickson, Attorney-General; and Mr. van

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Tonder, a member of the Executive Council, all of the Orange Free State.

RELIEF OF RUSTENBURG.

On the 12th July, instructions were received from the Commander-in-Chief to march to Kroonstad, and entrain for Krugersdorp, where the force arrived on the 16th, and was ordered to clear the road to Rustenburg, to relieve the garrison there, commanded by General Baden-Powell.

The column left Krugersdorp on the 18th, and reached Hekpoort the next day, without encountering any opposition, but from thence to Olifant's Nek continuous fighting occurred, the column losing four killed and four wounded during the four days march. Olifant's Nek was occupied on the 21st, the Boers retiring along the Magaliesberg range eastwards.

De Wet having broken westwards from the north-eastern portion of the Free State, and Delarey showing great activity on the Krugersdorp-Klerksdorp railway, Lord Methuen was ordered to proceed to Bank Station on that line, leaving the 1st Loyal North Lancashires, with two mule guns of the Bechuanaland Field Force and a few mounted men in occupation of Olifant's Nek. This garrison was withdrawn on the 6th August by General Baden-Powell and taken to Commando Nek, with the garrison of Rustenburg, that portion of the country being temporarily abandoned. General Sir Frederick Carrington returned west to Zeerust and Mafeking and the forces under Ian Hamilton and Baden-Powell retired eastward.

Lord Methuen's column reached Bank on the 26th July.

PURSUIT OF DE WET.

The celebrated chase after de Wet commenced on the 6th August. Lord Methuen's force at that time consisted of 750 Imperial Yeomanry, 2nd battalion Northamptonshire Regiment, 1st Northumberland Fusiliers, one Field battery, two howitzers and two pom-poms, and was camped near Potchefstroom. Gen. Smith Dorrien acted in support.

De Wet escaped from the cordon which had been drawn around him near Reitzburg and crossed the Vaal at Scandinavian Drift into the Transvaal, closely followed by the Colonial Division.

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Lord Methuen left Potchefstroom on the 6th for Scandinavian Drift to head off de Wet, marching 22 miles that day. An action ensued at Tigerfontein on the 7th with de Wet's rearguard, in which our casualties were five wounded. But the wily and slippery Boer general eluded the pursuing and heading columns. Lord Methuen's men marched ten miles that day and halted the next.

On the 9th the pursuit was resumed, and after marching 23 miles the column came up with de Wet's rearguard at Buffelshoek and engaged him, capturing five of his wagons, our casualties being two killed and eight wounded.

Lord Methuen kept close on de Wet's heels. The next day, the 10th, his guns shelled the Boer forces as they crossed the Gatsrand and covered 25 miles on that day.

After marching 23 miles the column reached Frederickstad on the 11th.

On the 12th the column began its trek at 3 a.m. and had an exciting and exhausting day, marching 30 miles besides engaging de Wet in a hard fought action which lasted four hours, driving him pell mell in front, capturing one gun, two ammunition wagons and five other wagons and inflicting severe loss upon him. In addition de Wet was compelled to leave behind 80 of the British prisoners he was taking along with him.

On the 13th the march was resumed at 3 a.m. but without coming in contact with the enemy, marching 26 miles.

The quarry was chased the next day to Magato Pass, the pursuit being resumed at 1 a.m. Six miles in front of the Pass a fight took place and the Boers retreated in haste over Olifants Nek, the way being open and clear, owing to the withdrawal of the garrison a few days previous. De Wet sent all his light baggage through Magato Pass safely, and he got away with his wagons, guns, men and numerous British prisoners. Lord Methuen's force had marched 27 miles that day in addition to a stiff fight and was not in a position to pursue further.

From the 9th to the 14th inclusive, a period of six days, the force marched 154 miles, an average of 26 miles per day, or 154 miles in 144 hours, and engaged the enemy four times. This is a record for the present war.

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That the plan to catch de Wet, failed, was obviously no fault of Lord Methuen and his gallant and heroic men. They marched, fought and worked, to the fullest extent of human endurance, and it is related that when it became apparent that the pass to which they had hunted their quarry was undefended, the rage and vexation of officers and men was unrestrained, loud and long.

A correspondent to the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* gives the following interesting account of the chase :—

Lord Methuen's division left Potchefstroom on August 6, on which date de Wet was known to be on the south side of the Vaal, between Schoeman's Drift and this side Vredefort. His instructions were to allow de Wet to cross the Vaal, then to follow in pursuit north, never allowing him any rest until he (de Wet) was to be finally stopped by a column which was to be in position for the purpose in the Magato Pass and Oliphant's Nek. Lord Methuen carried out his part of the programme to the letter, and more than one word of praise is due to his division for the magnificent manner in which, in spite of previous fatigue, they marched in pursuit of the enemy.

The division consisted of the 3rd, 5th, and 10th regiments of Yeomanry, a squadron of the Scots Yeomanry, 4th and 20th batteries of Royal Field Artillery, two pom-poms, two howitzer batteries, and a brigade of infantry under General Douglas. This force in six days covered 150 miles, and in nine days 198 miles, including one day's halt, and they fought four engagements on the road. At the close, when pressing hot upon the heels of de Wet, they marched the wonderful distance of eighty-three miles in three days, although fagged with their previous exertions. It is interesting to note by way of comparison, that General Broadwood's cavalry started twenty-seven miles to the good, and fresh, but Lord Methuen, with his already wearied mounted troops, arrived in the vicinity of the Magato Pass thirteen miles ahead, thus beating them by forty miles in the stretch of country between the Vaal and the Magaliesberg Mountains. Gen. Douglas' infantry only took twelve hours longer (including one day's extra halt) in completing this arduous march.

It will be seen from this that Lord Methuen was in pursuit of the enemy when he reached the mountains, but for some inscrutable reason Oliphant's Nek and the Magato Pass were not held, as he had been led to expect they would be, and de Wet crossed over the Magato Pass with his light baggage unopposed. Had the Magato Pass and Oliphant's Nek been occupied, de Wet would have been flung back into the arms of his pursuers, and nothing could have averted his capitulation.

These are plain facts, and we do not think they can be controverted. It is only fair, therefore, that an explanation should be forthcoming as to why there were no troops in possession at the Magato Pass and Oliphant's Nek before placing the blame for de Wet's escape on Lord Methuen's division, and withholding the praise due to them for such splendid marches as those described.

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The column was afterwards joined by the 3rd Cavalry brigade and was ordered to Zeerust, where he arrived on the 22nd and Ottoshoop or Malmani on the 25th. Here Lord Methuen was joined by Carrington's column and proceeded to Mafeking, reaching there on the 28th, and made a halt to refit and re-equip.

CLEARING SOUTH-WESTERN TRANSVAAL.

On the 7th September Lord Methuen had a flying column ready for a fresh start. We quote from Lord Roberts' despatch, dated 10th October :—

"He (Lord Methuen) proposed first to clear the country round Jacobsdal and Zeerust, and afterwards to march south towards Schweizer-Reneke, on Harts river, the garrison at that place being threatened by a local rising of the inhabitants of the Bloemhof district. A second small column was placed at Douglas' disposal for operations in the Lichtenburg district, and a garrison was detailed for Mafeking consisting of 400 mounted troops and 800 infantry, with four field guns.

"On the 9th September, Lord Methuen moved on a laager under Commandant Vermaas at Melopo Oog, ten miles south-east of Ottoshoop, and completely dispersed the Boers, taking 30 of them prisoners, and seizing 22 wagons and 40,000 rounds of rifle ammunition.

"On the 11th September, Douglas was attacked on the road from Ottoshoop to Lichtenburg, but drove off the enemy, capturing a large quantity of grain and other stores. He was again engaged the following day, when 39 prisoners, 10 wagons, and a considerable number of sheep and oxen fell into his hands.

"On the morning of the 19th, Lord Methuen, while marching from Jachkraal towards Schweizer-Reneke, heard of a Boer convoy moving in his vicinity. He pursued and dispersed it, capturing a 15-pr. gun which had been lost at Colenso by the 14th battery, Royal Field Artillery, 28 prisoners, 26 wagons, 8,000 cattle, 4,000 sheep, some rifles, and 20,000 rounds of ammunition. Next day he continued his march and reached Rietpan, 45 miles north-east of Vryburg Railway Station, where 634 cattle and 3,000 sheep fell into his hands.

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"On the 28th September, Methuen was twice engaged with Lemmer's force, consisting of 500 men, one gun and one pom-pom. The Boers had seven killed and 14 of them taken prisoners. Our casualties were two killed and three wounded.

"On the 22nd, Brigadier-General Settle, with a column from Vryburg, entered Schweizer-Reneke unopposed, and Lord Methuen began to move north with a view to clearing the Rustenburg district from the west.

* * * * *

"Leaving Rustenburg in two columns on the 9th and 10th October, Methuen reached Zeerust on the 20th after a very trying march through broken country covered with dense bush, aud having captured on the way a large number of wagons and prisoners. Delarey was on his flank during the whole march, but refused to fight. On the 16th October, Methuen surprised Lemmer, who retired with some casualties, leaving two dead Boers on the ground. Methuen's casualties during the march were six men killed and ten wounded.

"On the 24th October, Methuen's column from Buffelshoek (284) was joined by Douglas's brigade from Zeerust, and engaged the Boer commandoes, about 600 strong, under Lemmer, near Kaffir Kraal (214). These commandoes were dispersed, leaving six dead and four wounded on the field, while many wounded Boers were seen to be carried off. The Yeomanry, under Lord Erroll, on this occasion showed great dash, and succeeded in capturing 28 prisoners, 180,000 rounds of ammunition, 21 wagons with supplies, and a quantity of live stock. Our losses were 6 men severely wounded, 2 slightly, and 1 man missing.

"Large as the force appears to be in South Africa, it has proved all too small for the duties it has been required to perform, and I have not found it practicable to occupy in sufficient strength the many places it would have been advantageous to have held. Every garrison thus isolated not only reduces the power and mobility of the several columns in the field, but necessitates the withdrawal ot these columns from other important duties to periodically escort convoys of supplies for its use. Lately, however, since it has not been necessary to have such large columns in the field, I have been able to do more in this way, and,

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on the 26th October, I arranged for the permanent occupation of Zeerust, much to the satisfaction of the majority of the inhabitants of the Marico district, whose sympathies are more British than Dutch. Methuen was accordingly directed to leave at Zeerust four companies of Infantry, 100 mounted men, and two guns, the whole to be securely entrenched and provisioned for 60 days; and to place himself with the remainder of his force (with the exception of Douglas' brigade) west of Ottoshoop to prevent Botha from moving to the west of the Mafeking-Kimberley railway, as there were very persistent rumours that his intention was to invade the Kenhardt district in the hope of obtaining recruits, supplies and horses from the disloyal inhabitants of the Cape Colony.

"I ordered Douglas's brigade (consisting of Grey's Mounted brigade, strength—63 officers, 764 other ranks, two sections 88th battery, Royal Field Artillery; four pom-poms, head-quarters and two companies 1st Bn. Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, 2nd Bn. Northamptonshire Regiment) to Klerksdorp, partly in view of re-occupying that place, and partly to assist in some operations, I had directed Lieut-General French to undertake in the valley of the Vaal. Douglas marched to Mabalstad on the 1st November, and on the 11th he reached Ventersdorp after a 27 miles march across a waterless desert from Tafelkop, arriving at Klerksdorp on the 16th. After leaving Zeerust, Douglas was frequently engaged. His own casualties were few, while he succeeded in capturing 29 prisoners, 4,700 head of cattle, 11,200 sheep, 90 horses and mules, 138 wagons and carts, and large quantities of supplies."

On Sunday 14th December Lord Methuen fought an action with the Boers under General Lemmer, in which that General and another Boer were killed and five prisoners taken. The whole laager was taken, including fifteen ox wagons, a number of Cape carts, 15,000 rounds of ammunition, 1,500 cattle and 2000 sheep and a lot of grain which was destroyed. Our only casualty was one Yeoman killed. This action took place close to Ottoshoop, at which place Lord Methuen afterwards camped.

From that time until the end of January Lord Methuen's movements, though involving much hard work and weary marching, were not attended with any noteworthy results.

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TAUNGS TO KLERKSDORP.

LORD Methuen's column left Taungs on the 2nd Feb., 1901, and fighting commenced almost immediately. On the 3rd a sharp skirmish took place at Uitval's Kop in thick bush. The Boers laid in wait in the bush, and the troops had to clear the position, which they did in a most gallant manner. The Boers were in front and on the flanks in force. After some sharp fighting the Boers retired, our loss being one South Australian killed and five Bushmen and two South Australians wounded, among the latter being Lieut. Dempsey. The wounded were sent into Vryburg, and the column moved on. The next day four Boers were captured by some of the advance scouts, and during the night the camp was attacked, but the Boers were beaten off without loss on our side. It is impossible to say what loss the Boers suffered. The next day the enemy's position was searched with pom-pom fire, driving them out, leaving behind five wagons with women and children who were subsequently allowed to go. Later in the day another lot of women and children with wagons were captured and sent to Vryburg, for safe keeping.

On the 9th the column reached Doornbult, about 25 miles east of Vryburg, from whence provisions were obtained. Our pickets were sniped all the afternoon, and two native scouts were wounded.

From thence the column marched south-east and reached Schweizer Reneke on the next day, (10th). The Boers were in possession and had gone to some trouble to establish and make themselves comfortable. The telegraph lines to Lichtenburg and Wolmaransstad had been repaired. A Landdrost and J.P, appointed, and they were pursuing the even tenour of their way quite serenely, until the arrival of the column upset matters somewhat. A small force was sent to work round to the north-east to

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co-operate with the main column, but unfortunately did not get into the exact position required to hem the Boers, in and cut off their retreat. The Boers took up a position on the opposite side of the Hart's river which was flooded, and awaited the attack. Our artillery opened fire and shelled them with considerable effect, their loss being considerable. Among the killed was a nephew of Commandant Tolle de Beer and there were a number wounded also. A mounted force and a gun swam the river, and cleared the position, the Boers flying eastwards

Next day, the 11th, the column marched twenty miles north-east to Makouwspan which was reached without incident.

At midnight the column moved on, south-east to Wolmaransstad thirty miles distant. Our scouts came in contact with a party of Boers on the road before dawn, wounding one Boer and a horse. Commandant de Villiers was on the left of the line of march but did not offer opposition. Before entering the village the Boer forces worked round our left and tried to get in ahead, but our artillery shelled them vigorously and they cleared, after suffering some loss which, however, could not be ascertained. The Boers in the village cleared out smartly, and the notorious Commandant Pearson narrowly escaped being captured. He was in a cart, and one of the horses stuck, and our scouts were getting dangerously close, when the jibbing animal moved on, and the horses being fresh, he got away. A pocket-book belonging to him was picked up in which was written a proclamation purporting to be issued by Lord Roberts offering £50,000 each for the capture of Steyn and Kruger, £30,000 for de Wet, and other rewards for other Boer leaders. The concoction of lies was evidently intended for publication. Four Boers were caught, three of them Griqualand West rebels.

It was found that the prisoners held by the Boers at the place had been sent away the night before, accompanied by the valiant and fire-eating officials, and were out of our reach. Among them was Major Paget, of Paget's Horse, and six burgher prisoners condemned to death for assisting the British, by the Boer Court recently held there.

The convoy with infantry escort arrived at Wolmaransstad during the afternoon of the 13th.

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On the 14th the Boers attacked our outposts with artillery, to which our guns replied. Shelling was kept up till dark with what effect was unknown, but next day as the column moved out eight dead Boers were picked up. Our casualties were two of the Yeomanry wounded, and several horses.

We learned afterwards that the Boer plan was to hem us in in Wolmaransstad until General de la Rey's commando arrived, the intention being to capture the whole column, but their courage failed them completely and they cleared away to our front. A lot of stock was captured here and a number of undesirables were brought away.

The column moved out on the 15th, skirmishing going on in our front and on the right, and four dead Boers were found in a mealie field, but it is more than probable that many others were killed, as there was no time to look for dead bodies. We reached Uitval, about 15 miles N.N.E., that day.

Next day the advance in the same direction was continued, the Boers hanging on to our front and flanks most tenaciously and reached Rietfontein, fifteen miles further, and about 25 miles due west of Klerksdorp. Here a party of mounted men and a couple of guns made a wide turning movement to the left to intercept some wagons seen in that direction but they succeeded in getting away. De Villiers' commando hung on to our right and there were other parties in front and even round to the rear. Six of our men were wounded during the day's skirmishing. At 11 p.m., on the 16th the main column left for Paardeplaats, 20 miles north-east, thus making a detour to get round Hartebeestfontein where it was known the Boers were assembled in force and had with them a lot of their own prisoners. Here we learned that at Brakpan about two miles to our left a laager had been established, and the column moved there under cover of a ridge till quite close to the laager. The whole lot was captured consisting of forty odd prisoners, 40 wagons and carts, 1,500 cattle, 6,000 sheep and goats.

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HARTEBEESTFONTEIN POORT.

Camped at Paardeplaats and moved on next morning at 5 o'clock for Hartebeestfontein 12 miles south-east. A little in front of Hartebeestfontein a force of Boers fully 1,500 strong was encountered in a practically impregnable position. The column had to descend from a tableland, above 500 feet above the lower country. The road led down a hill side and then passed between high hills which formed a poort or narrow valley. On the left the hill was high and rocky and held in strong force by the Boers who outnumbered our fighting men two to one, and comprised detachments from the commandoes of Liebenberg, Celliers, de Villiers, Vermaas, Potgieter, and Tollie de Beer, and the position is known as Hartebeestfontein Poort. The position on the right was also held in force by the enemy who were attacked early in the morning by the 5th Yeomanry, who drove out the Boers and occupied the position. The stronghold on the left was the difficulty of the day. A series of ridges and kopjes ran at right angles to the road, the front facing the direction the column was going, being a high krantz or cliff steep enough to be difficult of ascent. The Boers occupied the ridges and kopjes and effectually commanded the road so that it was absolutely necessary to dislodge them before the column and convoy could proceed on its way. The 10th Imperial Yeomanry and the Victorians were advanced against the position extending to the left and advancing up the steep rock strewn slopes of the hill. A deadly fire was poured into them but they pressed on and after a severe struggle drove out the enemy and occupied the ridges and kopjes, but the Boers fell back to the edge of the krantz or cliff, a short distance off, where they had splendid cover and from whence they kept up a hot fire on our men, and for a time it seemed that it would be impossible to move them. The two sides were separated by a very short distance, some of the firing being at twenty yards range. Our fellows showed extraordinary bravery, and stuck to their work, regardless of losses, determined to win the day or die in the attempt. The action commenced at dawn, and at 10 o'clock, very little progress having been made, Lord Methuen ordered up two companies of the Loyal North

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Lancashires who formed part of the convoy guard, under Major Murray. They had to advance over an open space during which time several were hit, but they moved forward grandly as if on parade and got to their position which was an extension of the Yeomanry and Australian line to the left. They settled down to their work and the increased weight of metal hurled at the Boers soon told, their fire slackened perceptibly, until, at about midday, they broke and cleared in all directions. During this action the Lancs. lost severely. Lieut. Hewett was killed while directing his men, Lieut. Creak was shot dead about one hundred yards from the enemy's position and a colour-sergeant, corporal, and three men were killed, and seven or eight were wounded. The poort or gorge was then occupied while the convoy and the large flocks and herds came through.

The Boers had a 7-pounder Creusot gun with which they shelled our men as they advanced. The range was so short and our route so exposed that it was difficult for our artillery to work, but two guns were moved forward and did excellent service at short rifle range.

The Boer loss could not be ascertained but eighteen dead bodies were seen and there is no doubt they must have lost very heavily. The Boers reckoned that it would be impossible for our force to drive them out and they had counted upon an easy victory. A Boer stated that he could scarcely believe that such a small force of British, or in fact any force could have driven them out, the position having been strongly entrenched. The column was greatly encumbered with the large number of stock, and wagons, but they were all safely got out of the veritable hell's gate with out losing any of them. After forcing the position large quantities of grain and stock were captured. One thousand bags of grain were destroyed and a large quantity of forage. Our casualties were 34 wounded and 15 killed. Among the killed were Lieut. Creak, and Lieut. Hewett, Loyal North Lancashires. Among the wounded were Col. Kelly, A.I.R., wounded in leg severe; Capt. J. Warwick, Div. staff, severely in thigh; Capt. Wilson, 5th Yeomanry, dangerously in stomach (since dead); Lieut. Mann, A.I.R., severely; Lt. Parkin, A.I.R. severely; Lieutenant Molloy, 10th Yeomanry, slight.

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The next day (Monday) the column moved on, and on Tuesday about noon entered Klerksdorp, with 15,000 small stock and nearly 5,000 cattle. The total casualties in the expedition were 16 killed and died of wounds, and 43 wounded. The wounded men were placed in the Klerksdorp hospital until Thursday morning when they left by train for the Rand.

Out of 25 men of the 40th squad of 10th Yeomanry, fourteen were hit at Hartebeestfontein.

On Tuesday evening the sad task of burying the dead was performed. The bodies of the two officers and twelve men who had laid down their lives for their country were conveyed to the Klerksdorp cemetery, followed by as many of the troops as could be spared, the service being read by Chaplain Lieut.-Col. Simms, Chaplain Capt. Boardman, (N.S.W.) and Lieut. Gell, I.Y.

The following is the roll of dead:—*Paget's Horse*—Trooper A. D. Lipscomb; *Loyal North Lancashire Regiment*— Lieut. A. W. Hewett, Lieut. W. H. Creak, Col. Sergt. Dorey, Corpl. W. Meade, Lance Corporal Ousely, Private W. J. Jenks; *Australian Imperial Regiment*—Sergt. C. Vaughan, Troopers J. S. Hesketh and Jephthah Jonson; *Imperial Yeomanry* (40th Co., 10th batt.)—Sergt. Thos. Henry Pickett, Privates Maurice Church, Frank Douglas, Harry White; (14th Co., 5th Batt.) Trooper E. Hebeler.

Four Boers who were brought in were buried at the same time in a burial plot adjoining, Mr Naude and Chaplain Simms officiating.

Lord Methuen and staff remained till the close of the ceremony over the British dead, and were also present at the interment of the Boers.

A few days afterwards the column patrolled up the Schoonspruit valley in the direction of Ventersdorp, resulting in the capture of a number of prisoners, 800 cattle, and several thousand sheep.

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SWEEPING AND CLEARING S.W. TRANSVAAL.

AFTER resting a few days the column left Klerksdorp March 4, and captured two prisoners at Yzer Spruit south west of Klerksdorp. Here it was learned that a Boer force of 1,700 men with three guns and three maxims, under Delarey, Smuts and de Villiers, contemplated an attack on Lichtenburg, and as a matter of fact the place was actually being attacked at that time. Information was also received that the Boer leaders had called for volunteers to take part in an invasion of the Cape Colony. The attack on Lichtenburg was stated to be for the purpose of obtaining ammunition for the projected invasion. The next day the column moved to Koodooes Draai on the Vaal River. From this place a mounted force was detached to proceed to Wolmaranstad with the object of rescuing a number of Dutch men and others who had refused to break the oath of neutrality and had been taken prisoners by their own people and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment, but upon arrival at the village it was found that the prisoners had been removed to a safer place. The force, however, succeeded in capturing Landdrost Pearson, who, with the other officials and leaders, retired to the veld every night to escape British patrols and returned every morning. This individual, not knowing the British had occupied the town during the night, drove in and was made prisoner, On the afternoon of the 6th this force was attacked by a Boer commando of some six hundred men under Potgieter and du Toit. In the fight which followed our force sustained six casualties, none killed, and the enemy lost four men killed. The column intended to cross the Vaal river into the Orange River Colony at Commando Drift, but finding the stream too swollen, proceeded down the river to Bloemhof, Christiana and Fourteen Streams, under a sniping fire from the opposite bank of the river all the way down. At

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Bloemhof a letter was sent in by Delarey offering to exchange Major Paget, a Yeomanry officer in their possession for Landdrost Pearson, but the offer was declined, and Pearson was afterwards sent to Pretoria for trial. The column arrived at Fourteen Streams on 14th March. Here Lord Methuen contracted fever and went to Kimberley for attention, Lord Errol then taking oommand.

On the 28th the column left for Hoopstad to bring out the garrison and inhabitants. While *en route* a force of Boers made a night attack upon the camp, and in the fighting which followed Captain Bates and two men of the 5th Imperial Yeomanry were severely wounded and two Kafirs killed. A few head of cattle which stampeded fell into the hands of the Boers who were speedily driven off. Hoopstad was reached on the 2nd April and the column without delay, returned, bringing with it the garrison and all the inhabitants, and returned to Fourteen Streams on the 7th April. Lord Errol commanded the colnmn on this expedition.

After receiving some fresh drafts of Yeomanry the force entrained for Mafeking on the 27th, commanded by Lord Methuen, who had recovered and rejoined the column.

Leaving Mafeking on the 2nd May, the column reached Lichtenburg the following day, leaving that place again on the 4th, moving south. At Treurfontein two Boers were captured. On the 5th while on the march the baggage of the rearguard was heavily attacked about 9 a.m., but the Boers were dispersed and driven off after a short fight. A mobile force followed up the retreating Boers and advanced to a position which it was afterwards found a large combined force of the enemy had recently evacuated. The pursuit was continued, the Boers exerting themselves to the utmost to get away. Their only gun, a 12-pounder, originally belonging to O Battery, R.H.A., which was captured by the enemy at Moseilkatze's Nek about July of the preceding year, was captured from Kemp's commando by our men. In this fight and pursuit our casualties were one killed and two wounded, the known Boer loss being three killed and seven prisoners, they also

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lost three mule and one ox waggon. This was a long stern chase which lasted all day, the Boers scattering and flying in all directions, which made the chase very difficult. The column camped at Brakpan in the evening. Next day the column turned back towards Lichtenburg, considerably surprising and disconcerting the Boers, who had collected again in the rear, and driving them in confusion right and left in the direction of General Babington's column which was operating on the right, and Col. Sir Henry Rawlinson's force moving on the left. In consequence of this right-about movement the two columns on the flanks succeeded in capturing eighty prisoners, many waggons, and a large quantity of stock. March was afterwards continued to Mafeking.

On the 17th May the column left Mafeking and proceeded south, through Maritzani, Kraaipan and Geysdorp. Korannafontein was reached on the 23rd May. On arrival there it was discovered that a Boer force of 400 men under Tollie de Beer, Vermaas, and Potgieter had moved away a few hours previously. Chase was immediately given, and the enemy was soon sighted, streaming off over the wide and broken country in detached parties, each taking their own course. The pursuit lasted for hours and numerous captures were made, the net results being 15 prisoners, 20 wagons, 40 carts, 100 head of cattle and 11,000 sheep. Our casualties were one killed and four wounded of the new Yeomanry.

On the 26th the column marched at 11·30 p.m. and doubled back on Brakspruit, surprising a part of the enemy at daybreak the following morning. The Boers immediately beat a retreat and were soon flying in disorder, but our force was successful in securing 16 prisoners, 7 wagons, 12 carts, 360 head of cattle, 900 sheep and 11 horses. Lichtenburg was reached on May 30th.

On the first June the column marched towards Jacobsdal, and when passing over Kafir Kraal met 300 Boers under Cilliers and Botha, occupying a very strong position. They were promptly attacked and driven out of their stronghold, retiring north east, our force having eight men wounded. While entering Jacobsdal on the 3rd June the rearguard was vigorously attacked, but the Boers were

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again driven off, leaving three dead bodies on the field Ten of our men were wounded and several prisoners were taken who were afterwards released. The next day a convoy arrived from Mafeking. The following morning a mounted force left as escort to the convoy, on its way back to Mafeking. At 6 a.m. a party of Boers who were concealed in a kraal on the left, and remained perfectly unobserved until the main body had passed, suddenly opened fire upon the flanking screen at very close range. The enemy were driven out of their position with a loss of five men killed. On our side Lieut. King, of the General's escort, was shot through the brain and two others were also wounded. Though Lieut. King's brains actually protruded from the wound he eventually recovered. March was resumed and on the 7th at Grootafdeeling, near the Lead mines, a force of Boers were disclosed in a very strong position, which the advance guard at once attacked, advancing in splendid order, driving the Boers out of their concealment, killing three and wounding eight, without any casualties on our side.

The next day the Boers again opposed the column, having taken up a position on a ridge overlooking the Lead mines. The ridge was a very formidable obstacle and effectually covered the enemy, but our men rushed the position, and the Boers took to their heels without waiting for close quarters. On our side three were wounded, and some horses were shot, the Boers loss being unknown, though they must have suffered some loss.

The column then moved on to Diepkloof, where two Boers surrendered, and information received that three Boers were killed in the previous day's action. On the 11th Wonderfontein, on the Great Marico river, was reached on the way to Zeerust. The advance guard was heavily sniped as the column moved into camp, two of ours being killed. The Boers lost one killed and one taken prisoner. Zeerust was reached on the 13th and Mafeking on the 17th.

The column left Mafeking for Zeerust on the 2nd, reaching that place the following day. Having received information of the whereabouts of a party of the enemy, a rapid night march was made on the evening of the 4th for Nooit-

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gedacht. The Boers were badly surprised, and 14 of them were captured in some houses, together with 11 rifles and bandoliers filled with ammunition. In addition 350 bags mealies, 35 head of cattle, and a quantity of small stock were captured.

The following day at Olifants Vlei, a Boer laager was surprised and rushed at daybreak, and a splendid haul made without any casualties on our side. Twenty-nine prisoners were taken, 20 rifles and 386 cattle captured,

At Koppies Kraal, on the 8th, a flying column got on to the track of a party of the enemy, and a hot and exciting chase ensued, resulting in the capture of 16 prisoners and 300 head of cattle without any casualties on our side. The column returned to Zeerust, reaching that place on the 11th, and continuing the march to Mafeking, reaching that station on the 18th.

It was then arranged that Col. Hickie's and Col. Williams' columns, under control of Gen. Featherstonehaugh, should act in concert in a big sweeping movement which had for its base a line drawn from Klerksdorp in a north westerly direction to Mafeking, the columns moving south with a western trend. General Featherstonehaugh's columns were on the left of the line Klerksdorp end. Lord Methuen starting from Mafeking on the 6th August. He divided his column, sending a portion under Col. von Donop which he called No. 2 column, down the railway, through broken country to the Marikana range of hills running south, in which it was known a number of Boers were living. No. 1 column, commanded personally by Lord Methuen, struck south east to Lichtenburg, arriving there on the morning of the 8th, leaving the next day in the direction of Biesje's Vlei, south west, parallel with No. 2 column's line of march. The country is open and undulating, and a little sniping occurred, about 100 Boers under Jan Cronje doing their best to make things lively for the scouts and flankers. At Biesjes Vlei, enormous quantities of grain were found stored in houses, all of which was destroyed. From here the mounted men made a long march to Karree Laagte *via* Leeuw Kuil, a distance of 34 miles as the crow flies, in one day, the convoy following. Here a rest was made and communication

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established with General Featherstonehaugh at Koranna-fontein. The convoy came up next morning and column marched to Barber's Pan, about 17 miles west. Colonel von Donop with No. 2 column was then at Geysdorp, further west. Some Boer wagons and stock managed to slip through between the columns here and escaped. Moved south from the Pan to Doornbult on Brakspruit, General Featherstonehaugh being still on left moving south west. Lord Methuen struck camp at 1 a.m. and moved E.S.E. to prevent Boers breaking between the two columns, converging towards each other. The column again came into communication with General Featherstonehaugh, who helioed that he had just captured a laager, with forty prisoners and a lot of wagons and stock at Vleeschkraal, directly south of Doornbult. The column soon came in sight of the fugitives who had escaped from the capture. The Boers had separated and were trekking as fast as they could, isolated wagons being dotted over miles of country, and an exciting chase began, nearly every wagon being captured, the bag consisting of over 40 wagons, 17 Cape carts, 41 donkeys, 1000 mixed cattle, 100 trek oxen, 7000 sheep, 40 horses, 17 prisoners, and 2 surrenders, and including what had been captured at Biesjes Vlei over 2000 bags of grain destroyed or consumed. The mounted men covered between 45 and 50 miles during the day, and after much circuitous chasing reached Vleeschkraal that night. Among the prisoners was a man who had been sent to Green Point as a prisoner and returned to Mafeking laager, from whence he had cleared and joined the commando.

Marched to Schweitzer Reneke, which was uninhabited and in ruins, and met Gen. Featherstonehaugh with his two columns. From thence the columns marched west to Tochgekregen on the Marikana range, not far from the railway, and joined No. 2 column which had been engaged coming down the range, and had experienced a good deal of fighting, falling into an ambuscade one night in the darkness and sustaining several casualties. No. 1 column then marched on ahead, southwest to Taungs, where Col. Scott's column was met which had been operating from Taungs along the range of hills which runs parallel to the railway. Gen. Featherstonehaugh also joined at Taungs.

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Col. von Donop's column also joined, and the total results of No 1 and 2 columns at this stage were, nearly 500 women and children, 21 prisoners, 49 wagons, 21 Cape carts, 41 donkeys, 1,200 cattle, 104 trek oxen, 8,173 sheep, 45 horses, 2,998 bags grain, 2 surrenders, 8 rifles and some ammunition.

The column left Taungs on the 11th, and made north east for Klerkdorp. General Featherstonehaugh going south towards Bloemhof. The third day out, at Abelskop, some more stock, wagons and fugitives were captured, the impression of the Boers being that the British columns intended continuing south west into the Colony and the sudden turn eastward upset their calculations. The convoy was sent on to London, some 17 miles east, and the mounted troops swept to the right over Tollie de Beer's farm Vierfontein, where Delarey had been encamped a few days previously, capturing two prisoners, some wagons families and stock, and joined the convoy at London. A lot of wagons had left London that morning going south towards the Vaal river but hearing that Gen. Featherstonehaugh was coming along the right rear they struck to their left and tried to pass along the front of Lord Methuen and round his left flank, but making a night march to Vaalboschfontein the column intercepted them, sighting them at Kareepan in the open, just entering a belt of thick bush. A few shots were exchanged, but the chivalrous Boers bolted, leaving wagons, with their women and children behind. All but four of the wagons were captured. The wagons in flight had separated widely and the column opened out a front of ten miles in order to envelope the fugitives. Reached Kareepan and rested a day, making a 16 miles march though encumbered with a lot of stock, including 16,000 sheep. Spruitplaats was reached and the column then headed northwest towards Col. von Donop's column which was at Doornbult. At Koranna-fontein the column came in touch with a force of some 400 Boers under Delarey, mostly men from Wolmaranstad, Schweizer-Reneke and Marico, but only a few were engaged the bulk of them keeping carefully out of the way. Clouds of dust, indicating the presence of stock and wagons were sighted but as they were going straight into the path of

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No. 2 column and the horses were tired they were not pursued. Col. von Donop's guns were heard that evening. The convoy was joined at Rietvley. The advance guard of the convoy, consisting of some Welsh Yeomanry, rashly chased a party of Boers on to a bushy ridge right into the midst of a lot of Boers completely hidden from view at a few yards distance. The Welshmen numbered twelve with an officer, and were told to surrender, but they opened fire, the officer shooting a horse with his revolver. They behaved most pluckily and kept up the unequal fight until half of their number were hit when they surrendered. The officer was stripped and then told to go, and while walking away the Boers opened fire upon him, but missed him. A reinforcement of 16 men came up, whereupon the Boers cleared hurriedly, leaving behind them seven horses and one of their number dead, and four rifles, also the surrendered Yeomen. The column arrived in Klerksdorp on Thursday. The total captures since leaving Taungs were—76 horses, 400 trek oxen, 1,840 cattle, 16,550 sheep and goats, 1,077 bags grain, 56 donkeys, 72 wagons of which 32 were burnt, 8 mules, 19 Cape carts, 13 prisoners, 23 surrenders, including some old men, and forty families.

The column marched from Klerksdorp on the 28th August for Ventersdorp. At Klipplaatdrift, the enemy attacked the camp at night, but no damage resulted. Ventersdorp was reached on the 30th, where Col. von Donop's column was met, which had come from Lichtenburg. On the 31st Ventersdorp was left and Sandfontein reached on the 2nd September. Information had been received that van Tonder had a laager in the vicinity, and a most successful plan was conceived and executed. The laager was duly located, and surprised most completely. The Bechuanaland Rifles were in the lead and attacked suddenly and vigorously, at close quarters. The Boers were too surprised to make much resistance, but fled in all directions. Twenty prisoners were captured, and 33 rifles, 26 wagons and 1,200 head of cattle taken with no casualties on our side.

On the 5th Rhenosterfontein on the Great Marico river was reached. At this place it was found that Delarey with a force of 1,200 men held the drift in the valley, a

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most difficult position. The road made a bend on each side of the drift, so that the Boers could pour in a heavy fire on our men as soon as they turned the bend, and this they did with effect. The bush in the valley is so dense that it was impossible to leave the road, and the guns could not get into any position from which the enemy's locality could be sighted. A howitzer, however, opened fire, judging the best places to drop the shells by the sounds proceeding from the bush, and one lyddite shell did great execution. Eventually a ridge, which overlooked the valley, was cleared, which commanded the enemy's position, and after incredible exertions guns were hauled up and a destructive fire opened upon the Boers in the drift, who at once stampeded hurriedly. Seven dead Boers were found in one spot, three in another, and many others must undoubtedly have been slain. On our side fifty casualties were sustained.

On the 7th another engagement with a party of the enemy took place, in which a number of Boers were wounded, among them General Lemmer, in the thigh. Zeerust was reached on the 7th where Col. von Donop's column was again joined.

The two columns, in conjunction with Col Kekewich's column, then proceeded to clear the Zwarte Ruggens in the fertile and loamy valleys of which district it was known that enormous crops of wheat were ripening. The Boers still had a sort of communal government and had inspanned all the halt, blind and maimed men, the women and children who had not been gathered in by our columns, and all the Kafirs available, to plough and sow as much land as possible in out of the way places, where there was not much probability of their being disturbed by the meddling British columns. The district selected by the Boers is splendidly watered, and in addition the rains had been timely and abundant, and extensive fields of waving grain rewarded their efforts. In some places the lands extended for miles. Armed with sickles long lines of troopers and natives waded through the golden corn, hacking and cutting off the ears which fell to the ground and were trampled and destroyed by the reapers. Behind came other lines of destroyers and the work of destruction

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was rapid and complete. It is estimated that at least 15,000 bags of grain were destroyed in this way, and in addition much grain already reaped by the Boers was burnt. The Boers looked on at the work of destruction and vented their feelings by dropping in shots among the workers from adjacent positions. A few Boer families, who had escaped attention during previous visits, were found living in the hills, and were brought away.

The two columns effected a surprise party on the Boers. Having received information that Kemp had a laager at Riet Vlei with 800 or 900 men, he was suddenly attacked by the columns and a stubbornly contested engagement ensued, but the enemy, notwithstanding their strong and well chosen position, lost heart and retired. Three carts belonging to Kemp's staff, were captured, and two prisoners, and some days afterwards three dead Boers were found partially eaten by vultures. There were no casualties on our side.

On the 10th October, Steenkamp with a large force of men was touched, and chased from Bulhoek to Lindley Poort, about 18 miles. The enemy spread out, and dividing into parties, made strenuous efforts to escape. A string of mule wagons were chased for miles but eventually escaped by doubling back among some hills to the left. Other wagons coming into view in front the chase was diverted towards them, and eventually caught up, the bag being, five prisoners, 13 wagons, 2 carts, 300 cattle, 300 goats, 40 donkeys and a portable mill. On the 24th Oct. Col. von Donop's column was severely attacked by combined commandoes. The column had just crossed the Great Marico river at Kleinfontein. The road crossed the river, on the left was a long bushy ridge and on the right fairly open ground. In front was a long low ridge running at right angles to the road. A force of 350 men under Delarey had cleverly concealed themselves in the thick bush on the ridge on the left, and kept perfectly quiet and undiscovered while pickets of ours occupied certain points along it. While the column was winding along under the ridge Delarey's men suddenly rushed the convoy. At the same moment 350 men under Steenkamp rushed the rear, and 500 under Cilliers and Vermaas engaged the column from the ridge in front. The onslaught

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was fierce and sudden, and Delarey's force rushing across the front of the rearguard isolated it from the remainder of the column. Of our gun escort of 20 men who were with the rearguard 17 were killed and wounded, and our total casualties amounted to about 150. Delarey's men, however, failed in their rush. They were surprised to find that a number of the wagons contained a number of infantry of the Loyal North Lancashires and Northumberland Fusiliers who stood their ground and fired volleys at the stormers at a few yards range, some of them jumping on to the wagons to escape being trampled by the horses. The Boers rode through the line, followed by a heavy fire from the infantry escort, and on to the open ground beyond, where a heavy fire forced them to turn back and ride through the wagons again to the shelter of the bush from which they had delivered their charge. The frontal attack fizzled ont, and the force in rear, though they effected considerable damage, were also driven off. Thirty-four dead bodies of Boers were found close to the convoy, and undoubtedly other dead bodies must have been removed as well as many wounded. Among the latter Commandant Oosthuizen and four others are known to have since died of wounds. A shrapnel shell was seen to drop in the middle of a group of about thirty of the enemy, and 18 dead horses and one dead Boer were found there afterwards. The Boers succeeded in getting away with eleven of the rear wagons. The attack was well planned by the enemy and carried out with dash and bravery, but resulted in failure, though not without serious loss to the columns.

Delarey then travelled south towards Klerksdorp, and the columns followed him up closely, but when within a few miles of Klerksdorp found that their old enemy had doubled on his track and had passed them on his return journey to the Marico district they had just left. The vicinity of Klerksdorp comprises a number of mantraps in the shape of lines of blockhouses and Delarey was far too astute or cautious to risk being caught in corners from which there was not a broad and safe road of retreat.

Lord Methuen's columns arrived in Klerksdorp on the 10th November, bringing with them 13 prisoners, 35 families, 27 rifles, 1,300 rounds rifle ammunition, 34 wagons, 13 carts, 18 horses, 91 donkeys, 12 mules, 800

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head cattle, and 1000 sheep, and having destroyed on the trip nearly 500 bags grain, 26 ploughs and a mill.

Rinderpest having broken out among the ox transport the convoy was forced to remain in Klerksdorp some time. The cattle died at the rate of 50 and more daily, until inoculation was begun.

On the 26th a flying column with mule transport left at 3 a.m. in a north westerly direction. Col. Kekewich with his column travelled parallel on the right. At Rhenosterhoek the column halted and at 8.30 the same evening a move was made again to Commandant Vermaas' farm. About 500 yds. from the house the leading men surprised a party of nine Boers asleep in camp and the whole lot were bagged, together with six wagons, a number of Cape carts, 100 cattle, over 100 mules, 30 horses, and a quantity of supplies. At the house it appeared a party of sixty Boers were camped, but the commotion caused by the capture of the little laager alarmed them and they succeeded in saddling up and clearing for safer quarters. While this was going on the mule convoy and baggage in rear had a little diversion at about midnight. A strong party of Boers lay in wait for them at a favourable spot. The convoy came along, and quite ignorant of the trap halted a short distance from the enemy to allow the straggling line to close up. The Boers thereupon opened a heavy fire upon them, stampeding about 80 horses, which got away. The Boers retired immediately the fire was returned. On our side a trooper and a native were killed and several wounded. The Boer loss, if any, was unknown. The convoy shortly after resumed its march and joined the mounted men, all going into camp about 11 a.m. At 8 o'clock in the evening another night march was made towards Korannafontein, the mounted men leaving the convoy to come on behind. Commandant Vermaas' farm was again passed over, and at this place a strong picket of General Liebenberg's men was sighted, but they bolted without ceremony, into some bush on the farm Holfontein, near the road, and when the convoy reached that point these men opened fire upon it, but no damage resulted. The mounted men continued through the night, and Boers being reported on the flanks, the Divisional Scouting Corps

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under Major Cowan, and Yeomanry under Col. Chesney, made a wide sweep away to the right, and enveloped in their reach 13 wagons, some carts, 1000 cattle and 3000 sheep in the Klein Harts river, and the lot captured, the Boers, however, getting away. This movement involved a lot of hard riding. The Boers were in strong force but did not make much resistance, their anxiety being to get away. The remainder of the column joined the Scouts and Yeomanry at Holfontein, and started at midnight for another sweeping move to the left, the convoy and baggage going straight on to Bamboospruit south, to block the road in that direction. Boers with wagons were sighted and chase given, but after such a long night's work the horses could not overtake their prey. They then headed south east and joined the convoy. During the night one native despatch rider between the column and convoy was killed and another wounded. An ambulance wagon and doctor was sent to their assistance, which the Boers detained for a time, taking the doctor's horse and his field companion. The next evening at 8 30 another march was made to Tweepannen west, the baggage making straight for the place, and the mounted men making a wide detour south. This movement just missed another lot of wagons, which were, however, captured later. From Tweepannen an early morning march was made to near Wolmaranstad, where the bulk of Liebenberg's laager was captured. Wolmaranstad and Leeuwfontein were strongly held by Boers under Potgieter, Vermaas, and Liebenberg. A part of the screen got in touch with the Boers in Wolmaranstad, our men about 40 in number, advancing to near the dam. The Boers came out of the ruined village and tried to cut out a flock of about 3000 sheep, which our men had with them, but they were unsuccessful. From Wolmaranstad to Klerksdorp, where they arrived on the 4th December, nothing of importance occurred.

The total captures of the expedition were—36 prisoners, 42 wagons, 22 carts, 37,000lbs. grain, 37 families, 27 rifles, some ammunition, 1,110 cattle, 13,100 sheep, 50 mules, 102 horses, 70 donkeys, 34 ploughs, 1 steam mill and fittings of portable engine, and large quantity of harness, &c.

The principal feature of the trek was five consecutive

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night marches of 39, 28, 22, 24 and 22 miles respectively, which does not, of course, represent anything like the actual distance travelled by the mounted men in their flanking movements. The ground was uniformly heavy and swampy.

The column made a series of swerving movements, right, left, and rear, which disconcerted the Boers greatly, and contributed to the success of the expedition.

The two columns (Lord Methuen's and Col. Kekewich's) left Klerksdorp again in the morning of the 10th December, and after a short trek marched at 8·30 p.m. They had not been very long on the move when a trekking Boer party, under Field-cornet Van Rensburg, was discovered making off at top speed. It appears they had been warned of the approach of the British column by a Boer scout, who gallopped into the laager calling out "Good God are you all asleep, the whole country is full of Khakis." The Boers, it may be observed, place pickets round the British camps in preference to their own, and send messengers to acquaint friends of any movement. They were not quite smart enough this time, and our mounted men were soon in full gallop after them. After a long ride, ten wagons were secured, also eight carts, 800 cattle, a lot of sheep and horses, and nine prisoners. A number of wagons succeeded in getting away, but were caught later on. The column returned to Kareepan after a march of forty miles. On the night of the 13th a march was made to within 12 miles of Bloemhof, on the track of a lot of wagons, which were known to be in that locality, but they had received timely warning and escaped, though a portion of our force passed within two hundred yards of where a number of wagons were concealed, and actually camped within two miles of them, but the Boers laid low in the bush and escaped notice. A cart was seen, chased and captured, with two or three of the enemy. The main column, meanwhile, had moved to the left, fifteen miles off, and had a brush with Potgieter's men in the course of the early morning, but the Boers got away.

A combined movement was then planned to attack a party of Boers in the Makwassie hills. The hills in question run approximately north and south. It was arranged

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that Col. Kekewich should advance from the north, Lord Methuen with infantry and mounted men advance scouring the hills from the south, the 1st Divisional Scouts to take the western side, and Col. Von Donop the east. The Divisional Scouts under Major Cowan were detached a day earlier and marched over bush and veld away from roads to take up their position, and Col. Von Donop made a wide detour to get on the east. The plan was well conceived, and the result was satisfactory in the extreme. Lord Methuen, coming from the south, had some fighting, but not one casualty. The whole lot of wagons and stock were captured, but Potgieter, with about 60 men, got out between two of the parties, who had not quite joined. Including the capture of the previous day and a small capture the second day afterwards, the "bag" amounted to 36 prisoners, 108 wagons, 71 carts, 2,900 cattle, 32,000 sheep, 230 horses, 280 donkeys, 13 rifles, 218,000 lbs. grain, 10 mules, 35 families. The column under Col. Kekewich captured 2 prisoners and a quantity of stock in additlon to the foregoing.

The columns returned to Klerksdorp on the 20th of December.

Lord Methuen's column left Klerksdorp on Boxing Day and proceeded along the Vaal-river down to the junction with Rhenoster Spruit. From thence the flying column continued down the river, the convoy proceeding in the direction of the Makwassie hills. There were parties of Boers in the hills, but they retired on the approach of the convoy and also evacuated Wolmaransstad. Very little stock was fallen in with. Information had been received that two laagers had trekked in to the Transvaal from the Free State, and the flying column kept along the river to prevent them recrossing. In this they were successful. The Boers were headed north-west, and a commando under Tollie de Beer retired in front towards Christiana where they fell into the hands of Major Paris. Going through the Marikana range, the country was cleared, the Boers retiring north. The column arrived at Vryburg on the 6th January with a quantity of stock, wagons, carts, &c.

Vryburg was left on the 12th, and at Mooiplaats Col. Bodle, with a party of B.S.A.P., came across some Boers,

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of whom they ran down three, and captured some stock and wagons. A night march of 37 miles was made by the mounted men across the Harts-river and up Brak Spruit to Welgevonden, where a large party ot Boers with wagons and stock were come in contact with. The column at once attacked, and after some heavy firing the Boers cleared in all directions. A hot chase ensued, in which several Boers were hit, two taken prisoners, and 7 horses, 527 cattle, 1900 sheep, 54 donkeys, 24 wagons, and 7 carts were captured. Next night another forced march of about 40 miles was made to Palmietfontein, where the two Free State laagers were surprised and captured complete. The Boers did not make much resistance, but trekked in all directions, making a chase of some ten miles. The result was the capture of 21 prisoners, 17 rifles, 1,247 cattle, 2,400 sheep, 34 wagons, 10 carts. Delarey was in the close neighbourhood, but did not deem it advisable to interfere. At the end of the chase the strung-out line of pursuers came in sight of a number of other Boers with wagons, trekking southwards out of the way of Cols. Hickie and Kekewich, but the forced marches and long chase had knocked up our horses and it was useless trying to catch them. The column then marched into Lichtenburg without further incident. Up to this point the captures were—23 prisoners, 19 rifles, 53 horses, 1,930 cattle, 8,190 sheep, 182 donkeys, 85 wagons and 26 carts.

While in Lichtenburg a patrol of about 200 Yeomanry and B.S.A. Police under Col. Chesney went out and surprised a party of Boers who promptly took to their heels, the patrol in full chase. The pursuit lasted from Lilydale to Slypsteen. The pursuers strung out according to quality and endurance of horses and all went well until the lead rode up against a position held by some 300 Boers under General Celliers. The Boers promptly attacked and drove our scattered men back and getting in among them. Capt. Drury and Lieut. Murray of the B.S.A.P. with a small party rallied and held a position until their ammunition became exhausted when they were forced to surrender. The Boers were well mounted on fresh horses and our men, after their forced marches and long chase, were at a great disadvantage. Our casualties were—9 killed, 25 wounded, and 41 taken prisoners. The patrol

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was reinforced by Lord Methuen from Lichtenburg and the prisoners who had been released, and the casualties brought in. Five dead Boers were seen.

The column left Lichtenburg on the 25th going east towards Duikerfontein where Kemp with a commando was laagered, but he heard of the approach of the column and retired towards the Marico. The column continued its eastward course to Rietpan, and then moved south to Sterkfontein. Kemp also moved south, and the column made a night march to Malagasfontein to surprise him and Delarey, but they eluded the movement. Camped at Slypsteen and continued south next day, when a force of 700 or 800 Boers under Generals Delarey and Celliers and Commandant Vermaas, were encountered. They were promptly engaged, mostly with Artillery fire, and the enemy retired north west. Camped at Boschpoort, and from thence a night march to Hartebeestfontein where Gen. Liebenberg with his own and some Marico men, to number of about 400 held a strong position. The position was attacked, artillery and rifle fire being opened upon it, and the enemy were driven out with some loss, as a numnumber of Boers were seen to fall and several riderless horses gallopped away. Our casualties were three wounded. A number of the enemy hung on to the rear, and exchanged shots with the baggage rear guard for some distance along the road to Klerksdorp. The column arrived in Klerksdorp about noon on Saturday, February the 1st.

Lord Methuen's force left Klerksdorp on the evening of the 7th February under command of Col. Von Donop. Lord Methuen leaving with Lady Methuen for Johannesburg. At dawn the next morning the column surprised a party of Boers at Zendelingsfontein under command of Comdt. Potgieter In the fight which ensued two Boers were killed, three wounded and 36 prisoners captured. There were also captured 400 head of cattle, 400 sheep, 58 rifles, 44 saddles, 25 wagons and 15 carts.

The same night a vigorous and sudden attack was made on the camp. The enemy contrived to creep close up to

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the camp unperceived by the outposts, actually getting in between an outlying picket and the camp. They then opened a heavy fire from all sides, pouring in a hail of bullets, riddling the tents, and hitting a number of animals, though very few casualties occurred among the men. After a few minutes really hot work the fire suddenly ceased and the Boers vanished as silently as they had come, followed by a heavy fire from the camp. Snipers hung round the camp all night keeping the pickets on the alert.

The column moved on to Wolmaransstad, which was made a temporary centre of operations. A convoy with escort went into Klerksdorp on the 13th February with the prisoners and captures and returned a few days later to the column.

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JAGT SPRUIT.

ON Monday evening, 24th February, a convoy of empty wagons which had been sent in to the depot at Klerksdorp, from Colonel von Donop's column at Wolmaransstad, encamped on the eastern bank of Yzer Spruit (Iron stream), some fourteen miles distant from Klerksdorp. The convoy consisted of about 160 mule wagons, and a few ox wagons, and was escorted by three companies of the 1st battalion Northumberland Fusiliers, the 13th, 14th, 15th, 101st squadrons and Paget's Horse of the Imperial Yeomanry, two 15-pounders, one pom-pom, and two maxims, one attached to Paget's Horse and the other to the 5th I.Y. The whole was under the command of Lt.-Colonel Anderson, I.Y. Paget's Horse, numbering about sixty men, were sent into town on Monday evening, to entrain early next morning.

Nothing unusual transpired during the night. The picquets were placed as usual, and no precautions neglected.

The convoy moved out of camp at about 4.15 next morning in the usual order. Front and rear screens and flankers were all in their accustomed places. The front screen was composed of Yeomanry, and this part of the little column had proceeded but a couple of miles from camp when they were suddenly assailed by a tremendous fusilade from some bush in their front at close range, The fire did considerable damage, and practically put the Yeomanry screen out of action, but it was returned instantly. and the guns and pom pom which were on the left front also added their sonorous tones to the destructive concert, as a matter of fact the artillery were left in the front rank, and succeeded, almost unaided, in silencing the Boers and compelling them to shift. The morning was very dark and gloomy, it having rained nearly all night and the clouds still hung heavy and lowering. Objects at a short distance could only be seen very indistinctly. A large force of Boers was then discerned advancing towards the left flank. They came on at first in somewhat close order, and the pom pom was turned on upon them, raining upon the enemy a hail of spiteful little shells, which could be seen bursting all along the advancing line. This checked the enemy, who retired, but soon returned to the task and came charging forward with great boldness. Some of our infantry skirmished

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along the flank and poured a heavy fire into the Boers, and many riderless horses were seen as a result of their efforts. At length after several rushes the main body of the Boers disappeared behind a fold of the ground, and it appeared as if the attack was abandoned, only a light fitful fire being maintained.

While this attack was in progress the convoy was halted and the wagons were parked a little way off to the right. When the enemy's fire diminished the convoy was got under weigh again and resumed its march towards Klerksdorp. Before they had properly strung out, the attack was renewed with greater vigour than ever, the principal efforts of the enemy being directed against the rear guard. The rear screen of Yeomanry was severely handled, and the remnant were driven back on to the rear guard, consisting of a slender line of the Fighting Fifth, but these were seasoned soldiers and plied their weapons for all they were worth. The opposing force however, outnumbered them many times. Unfortunately the 5th Yeomanry maxim went wrong after the first few shots, and had to be withdrawn out of action which was cleverly and courageously done by Trooper Taylor of that regiment, who carried it out on his back for about 400 yards and placed it on a wagon which contrived to reach Klerksdorp safely. The men in skirmishing order knelt down steadily and poured in a heavy destructive fire at the large force of mounted men which came down upon them. Men and horses tumbled over in all directions but the Boers charged home through the ranks of the rear guard, firing from their horses, and back again, until with more than half their number down and ammunition run out the remnant of the gallant Northumberlands and Yeomanry were forced to surrender, but not, however, until they had inflicted heavy loss on their assailants.

The guns at the front had become separated from their escort, and were firing steadily at some Boers at about 800 yards range, when they were surprised to see their escort come up from the flank, but to their greater surprise, when they had arrived within fifty yards, the escort dismounted and started firing at them. It was a party of Boers in British uniform, and the guns were forced to surrender.

Meanwhile the convoy had been travelling forward under a heavy fire from Boers on the left flank, which was returned by the Yeomanry, who continued with the wagons. Mules were shot down and wagons hindered in their progress, the consequence being that they lengthened out and made it more difficult for the escort to protect them. About seven miles from Yzer Spruit the Jagt Spruit (Hunt Stream) crosses the road. Four wagons got through, but the fifth broke down in the drift, and a block

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ensued, making it impossible for any more to get across. There was another drift further up the stream on the left, but the Boers who, of course, knew this, kept up a merciless fire from that side and prevented them going in that direction.

There was nothing more to be done, and the Yeomanry were then compelled either to surrender or retire. Those who were still mounted chose the latter alternative and crossing the Spruit in all sorts of difficult places, made the best pace they could, most of them having already exhausted their ammunition. Paget's Horse maxim, which had also jammed early in the fight, was saved by its crew and brought in, having first distributed the ammunition among the riflemen. Crossing the Spruit it nearly fell into the hands of some Boers, whereupon the lock was taken out and thrown into a mud hole. The retreat was continued to the line of blockhouses which extends from Klerksdorp down the Schoonspruit to the Vaal River, the Boers following very closely, keeping up a straggling fire. The men in the blockhouses, unable to distinguish friend from foe, as many Boers were dressed in khaki and wore I.Y. puggaries, judged from the dropping fire which came in their direciion that it was an attacking force and opened fire on them. The Yeomanry then worked up to the Old Town kopjes, but seeing another force advancing towards them, whom they believed to be enemies, but were in reality Anglicised Boers enrolled in the National Scouts, crossed the Schoonspruit and came through the location into town where they continued to arrive singly and in small parties during the early morning, to the number of just over 100. The heavy firing was heard very distinctly in town, and most of the inhabitants were awakened by it.

The detachment of Paget's Horse which had arrivrd in Klerksdorp the night previous, and a small force of National Scouts under Andries Cronje went out to support the pressed convoy came in touch with the enemy, and exchanged shots with them, but arrived too late to be of much assistance, the fighting having ceased, and those who escaped had already reached safety.

A detachment of South African Constabulary, which left town at a very early hour that morning for Hartebeestfontein, had been delayed at the drift over the Jagt Spruit some six miles higher up than the drift in which the convoy became blocked. A party was detached from this small column to the scene of the fighting, but also arrived too late to be of any assistance.

The Boers with their booty, retired back along the Wolmaransstad road to the Rhenoster Spruit, where they camped for the night. During the fight they had three ambulances picking up

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their dead and galloping with the bodies away from the fighting line. Two German doctors were with them.

Our dead and wounded left on the field, were robbed of all their valuables and their clothing, some being stripped entirely naked, and most of those taken prisoners were served likewise. It is said, however, that Delarey, who was in command, did his best to stop the pillage, and even used his sjambok for that purpose.

The Boers were fully 1,500 strong, Delarey being in chief command, though several other Commanders who frequent this part, were also present. A number of armed Kafirs are reported to have been in the Boer ranks.

Drs. Watson and Laing, civil surgeons attached to the Yeomanry, who were present with the convoy, immediately set to work to assist the wounded and worked most assiduously all through the day, assisted by willing orderlies among the unwounded. Dr. Laing was wounded during the fight, a bullet penetrating his thigh, but he remained at his work all through the day and night.

Ambulances were sent from town to the scene of the fight, also a doctor, and the wounded were brought in as soon as possible, the wagons continuing to arrive all the afternoon, through the night and next morning. A number of the killed were buried on the field and some were brought in the next day and buried in the cemetery.

The casualties were as follows:—

Imperial Yeomanry.—Killed, Capt. Hood (Central India Horse), Lieut. A. C. H. S. Wingrove, and 15 others; wounded, Lieut. N. Deakin (severely), Surg.-Capt G D Laing (slightly), Capt. M. R. C. Backhouse, and 46 others; missing, presumably prisoners, Lieut.-Col. W. C. Anderson, Capts. C. A. Armstrong, H. C. B. Phillips, and A. L. Phillips, Lieuts. W. H. George and H. Gwynne Smith and 179 men; prisoners, since released, 49.

1st Northumberland Fusiliers.—Killed, Capt. F. R. Coates, Sec. Lieut. H. G. Quin, and eight others; wounded, Sec. Lieut. W. Gibson (severely), Maj. H. S. Enderby, and 55 others; missing, Sec. Lieut. R. C. Raw, and 115 men; prisoners since released 27. Sec. Lieut. Raw and 104 non-commissioned officers and men have also rejoined.

3rd S. Stafford Rgt.—Killed, 18; wounded, four.

3rd S. W. Borderers.—Killed, Lieut. H. Harbord and two others; wounded, Capt. J. M. G. Watt (severely) and four others; missing, ten; prisoners since released, eight.

R F.A.—Wounded, one; missing, Sec. Lieut. N. Patterson and 19 men; prisoners since released, 17.

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Army Service Corps.—Wounded, two; missing, Sec. Lieut. Lieut. J. O. Hyndman and nine men; prisoners since released, one officer and two others. Lieut. Hyndman and his men have also rejoined.

B S.A. Police.—Wounded, two; missing, Lieut. Ingham and ten men.

Bechuanaland Rifles.—Killed, one; wounded, three.

4th Bedford M.I -Killed, one.

The prisoners were taken by the Boers across country to Kraaipan, between Mafeking and Vryburg ,and there released.

A week after the fight Col. Kekewich's column thoroughly searched the ground and found 8 dead bodies which were interred on the field of battle, 2 Kafirs and three soldiers were found laid out in an old house.

The Boer loss is an unknown quantity. Delarey informed his men that their total casualties were 37, but this appears an undue economising of the truth, and there is good reason to believe that their loss was at least equal to ours.

A Boer prisoner states their killed and wounded as follows—

Liebenberg's	Com.	2	killed	13	wounded
Cellier's	,,	8	,,	33	,,
Kemp's	,,	7	,,	13	,,
		17	killed	59	wounded

The attack that our men repulsed in the earlier part of the engagement was a premature one made by Kemp, as it was not until Celliers came up that they charged our men.

On the day the convoy was captured Major Cowan with the Divisional Scouts were out at Leeuwfontein to surprise a Boer picket; at the final rush before daybreak, however, a troop ran into a wire fence and alarmed the Boers, who got clear off. Returning to camp, the news was received of the disaster. The column was now less than 500 men in number with a 15-pounder and pom-pom and their position was somewhat precarious. A party of 100 men and a gun were left entrenched at Wolmaranstad and the remainder moved out of camp. About six miles out they were attacked by a large commando of Boers while passing through some bush. The rear guard was cut off for a time, and an officer and one man of the 10th I.Y. were killed, three men wounded, and about six taken

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prisoners. Reinforcements were, however, sent back and the position relieved. At midnight a force of South African Constabulary from the Orange River Colony joined them and the combined force moved back to Wolmaranstad where they were joined the next day by Col. Kekewich.

For a month the remnant of the 1st Division, which was now attached to Col. Grenfell's column, patrolled up and down the western Transvaal, sometimes on the track of their lost convoy, and always in contact with bands of sniping Boers who hung to the flanks, rear and front with tiresome pertinacity. Later, the diminished force took part in the combined operations against Delarey and was present at the stiff fight at Rooiwal, in the forefront of the battle, where the tables were turned, and the Boers lost heavily. The conclusion of peace at the end of May, finished the story of the first Division of the South African Field Force.

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KLIPDRIFT (OR TWEEBOSCH.)

AT the time of the disaster to the convoy Lord Methuen was in the Cape Colony. As soon as he heard the news he went to Vryburg and took command of Major Paris' column, which arrived there later, together with as many details as he could gather, and left Vryburg on the 2nd March with that force, having arranged to meet Col. Grenfell's column at Rooirantjesfontein. The composition of Major Paris' column is described in Lord Methuen's official despatch, to which, however must be added Keeley's Scouts, a small local force. The column soon came into touch with the enemy, and the next day some skirmishing occurred between the advance guard and parties of Boers. On the 6th some sharp fighting occurred.

On the night of the 7th the force was camped at Tweebosch. The next morning at about 3 o'clock, the ox convoy, with escort, moved out of camp in the direction of Rooirantjesfontein, the column which they were to join being at or near that place at the time. An hour afterwards, the main body with the mule baggage wagons moved out also, and at daybreak had just come in sight of the ox convoy which had preceded them. The rear guard consisted of Dennison's Scouts, mostly off-coloured men, and was marching in usual formation very close up to the wagons. A large body of Boers suddenly appeared in the rear, riding furiously and firing from their horses as they charged. They dashed up without hesitation, right into the rear guard, throwing them into confusion, and they retired precipitately, mixed up with the Boers, and some fierce fighting ensued. The Boers were mostly dressed in British uniform and were quite indistinguishable from the British, and as the mixed force came galloping on the rear of the column considerable confusion occurred. A party of 5th Yeomanry were ordered to reinforce the rear guard, but these men found that the rear guard had practically disappeared and that their place had been taken by the Boers, and the Yeomen were forced to retire. A pom-pom was also sent back to reinforce the rear, but the detachment found themselves in the midst of the

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enemy whom they mistook for their own men, and the gun and detachment were captured. Meanwhile the mule wagons closed up to the ox convoy, which had been ordered to halt, and the infantry were placed in the best position for defence, promptly checking the rush of the Boers.

Almost simultaneously, another large body of the enemy vigorously attacked the right rear, riding up to within a few hundred yards, dismounting, and kept up a heavy destructive fire upon the baggage and defending force. At the same time the rear attack worked round the left flank, and these movements appeared to demoralise the bulk of the mounted troops who retired to the left. The mules stampeded in consequence of the heavy fire, and moved in a confused mass past the ox wagons, and were captured some two or three miles away from the scene of further resistance. The demoralised mounted troops left the field, and made their way in the direction of the railway line, which two or three hundred of them reached in safety. The fight now devolved upon a few of the mounted troops who did not share in the flight, principally Cape and B.S.A. Police, and the infantry and artillery, who remained true to their glorious traditions, and kept their faces to the foe. The disappearance of the mounted men, however, left the artillery exposed to short range rifle fire, which simply decimated the gunners, who gallantly served their guns until their officers were both killed and every man hit, when they fell into the enemy's hands.

The Boers gradually worked round both flanks, and maintained a heavy fire, cautiously closing in, keeping well under cover until, overwhelmed by superior numbers, the position became absolutely untenable, and the force was compelled to surrender. Lord Methuen fell wounded prior to the surrender, also his Principal Medical Officer, Col. Townsend, and all his staff officers, but one, were wounded.

The last stand was made at some farm buildings to which Major Paris retired with a number of men of different Corps, about forty in all. A sturdy defence was made, until the enemy brought two guns to bear upon them, the first shell dropping into a kraal, killing and wounding nearly every horse in the enclosure. The Boer General then called upon Major Paris to surrender, which he declined to do, and artillery fire was reopened upon the

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little force, rendering the position quite impossible, the shell fire being very accurate, and the Major was compelled to surrender at about 10 a.m., this concluding the British resistance.

The retreating mounted men were pursued for some miles by the Boers but several hundred got away and reached the railway line at Maribogo and Kraaipan.

The British casualties were about 50 killed and 150 wounded. The Boer loss is not known, but Boers have stated numbers varying from 10 to 20 killed, and 30 to 50 wounded.

The Boers were most severe on the Dutchmen serving in the British corps, and showed them no mercy, The young lads who accompanied the commando are said to have behaved cruelly towards the natives in our employ, and many of these natives were shot down.

The Boers were over 1500 strong, and were led by Delarey, Celliers, Vermaas, Kemp, and other well known leaders were also present. They were mostly dressed in khaki, and among them were a number of foreigners and also natives.

The British prisoners were not treated badly, and were allowed to proceed west towards the railway the next day, being provided with some food for the road.

Lord Methuen was taken to the Boer laager, where he was attended to by a German doctor, and also Dr. Prentice, civil surgeon, who had accompanied the column. Delarey permitted the wounded General, together with Col. Townsend, Dr. Prentice, and a couple of orderlies, to proceed to Klerksdorp, and they started on their journey. After their departure, however, the Boers protested against Delarey's action, and messengers were despatched to bring them back. These messengers overtook the party at Oorbietjesfontein, about 18 miles distant from Klerksdorp, and they were taken back to Gestoptefontein. Meanwhile, the Boers held a meeting on Sunday the 9th, and after a lengthy discussion agreed to his departure, and the General and his party arrived in Klerksdorp on the 13th March.

Boers who have laid down their arms since the declaration of peace, and who were present at the fight ascribe their success to the bad behaviour of our Boer allies whom they contemptuously term "hands-uppers," and of whom there was a considerable number with the column.

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LORD METHUEN'S OFFICIAL DESPATCH.

From Lieutenant General Lord Methuen to Chief of Staff—

Klerksdorp, 13th March, 1902.

Sir,—I have the honour to inform you that, with the object of preventing the force under General Delarey from moving northwards to the Marico District through the gap between Lichtenburg and Mafeking, I sent orders to Colonel Kekewich, C.B., at Wolmaranstad, to send a column towards Rooirantjesfontein, where he would meet a column under Major Paris, Royal Marine Artillery, from Vryburg.

I, at the same time, directed Colonel Rochfort to cross the Vaal from Orange River Colony, and to move northwards by the Bamboo Spruit, or the Harts River, and thus drive General Delarey towards the Columns which were heading for Rooirantjesfontein.

2. Colonel Kekewich informed me, on 2nd March, that he was sending column, consisting of 1,600 mounted men, lightly equipped, while Colonel Rochfort wired that the command would contain about 1,000 men.

3. The column under Major Paris, which I accompanied, consisted of the following units :—

5th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry, 184 men under Capt. Jennings.

Cape Police (including Special Police), 233 men under Major Berange.

Cullinan's Horse, 64 men under Captain Cullinan.

British South African Police, 24 men attached to Cullinan's horse.

4th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, I section under Lieutenant Venning , D.S.O.

1 pompom, "GG" section, under Captain Geoghegan, Royal Field Artillery.

These units did not belong to Major Paris's column but were an addition, placed under his command.

Major Paris's column before the fresh units were placed under his command at Vryburg :—

86th Company Imperial Yeomanry, 110 men.

Diamond Fields Horse, 92 men.

Dennison's Scouts 58 men under Captain Browne.

Ashburner's Light Horse, 126 men under Captain Ashburner.

38th Battery Royal Field Artillery, I section under Lieut. Nesham

1 pompom, "D," Field Artillery.

1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers, 200 men under Captain Montagu.

1st Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, 100 men under Lieutenant Paul.

The Infantry were attached to the column at Vryburg.

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4. My written instructions to Major Paris were that I should give him daily the direction of the march, and the time of startind for the following day, in case of any fighting, that he should look after the Mounted Brigade, and that I would stand by the guns and Infantry, and give him general instructions.

The mounted troopswere the best horse force that I have yet had under me, added to which the Cape Police, under Major Berange, held an exceptionally high reputation, as did also the local corps. I remarked to Major Paris, on leaving Vryburg, that I could not believe in the numbers given to me. He again made inquiries, and satisfied himself thst the numbers were correct.

5. I informed Colonel Kekewich, by wire, that I should reach Rooirantjesfontein on 7th March.

6. 2nd March.—The column under Major Paris left Vryburg at 5 a.m. ; the supply column, consisting of 39 ox waggons, and the baggage of 46 mule wagons; owing to heavy rains which had fallen during the night the last wagon did not reach O'Reiley's pan, a distance of 13 miles, till 5 p.m. I therefore at once sent a messaage to Colonel Kekewich to inform him that I should be one or perhaps two days late at Rooirantjesfontein. I had previously informed him that the position of the enemy had rendered it necessary for Major Paris's column to bear more to the north-west towards Polfontein (254).

7. 3rd March.—Owing to the animals being exhausted by the previous day's trek, the column was only able to reach Grootpan (Bestersfarm), a distance of six miles. During the march the police, forming the advance guard under Major Berange, killed three local rebel Boers, by name Steyn, Bester, and "Jonson."

8. 4th March.—At Grootpan I heard that large droves of cattle and Van Zyl's (rebel) commando had moved eastwards towards Doornbult (197). That morning Major Paris's column marched to Graspan, two miles beyond Mooiplatz (244 B), a distance of 13 miles, where there was plenty of water. As there had been no rain in these parts, it was very doubtful whether, if I trekked by Klipdrift (188), as I had told Colonel Kekewich I intended to do, I shonld find water at Vaalkop (183), or Rietvlei (279).

9. 5th March.—I therefore moved to Boschpan (68) in the morning, which I found all but dry, and in the afternoon to Barberspan, a distance of 21 miles, where there was plenty of water. Here I was informed that there had been rain at Leeuwkuil (95), and that there certainly was water at Leeuwkuil (23).

10. 6th March.—The column moved off at 5 a.m., the ox convoy having moved at 4 a.m. The whole force reached Leeuwspruit (232) about 7.30 a.m. Here I sent on a detachment of

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Cape Police to Leeuwkuil (95) to make certain of the existence of water.

There had been some sniping at the rearguard by about 100 of Van Zyl's commando, and, seeing some confusion, I went back myself, sending at the same time for the section of the 38th Battery.

I found the men forming the rear screen, which consisted of the 86th Company Imperial Yeomanry, very much out of hand, and lacking both fire discipline and knowledge of how to act. There seemed to be a want of instructed officers and non-commissioned officers. Van Zyl's commando being accurately shelled by the section Royal Artillery, eventually retired and moved round our right flank to Tweebosch (247), while the column halted at Leeuwspruit (232).

On receiving information that there was no water at Leeuwkuil (95), I decided to move to Tweebosch (247), where Van Zyl's commando had taken up a good position in the bed of the Klein Hart's river.

Major Berange, with the police, the section 4th Battery, and the pompom "GG" section were ordered to move straight on Tweebosch (247), while Dennison's scouts, supported by Cullinan's Horse were to move round the enemy's left flank. The commando retired rapidly, the police under Major Berange working with the greatest quickness. Much praise is due to Major Berange for the way in which he handled his men, Our casualties were one killed and two wounded. As the day was hot, and it was then 11.30 a.m., I decided to remain at Tweebosch (247).

11. 7th March.—At 3 a.m. the ox convoy moved off towards Leeuwkuil (23) with an escort of—

1 squadron Cape Police.
86th Company Imperial Yeomanry.
200 men 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers.
100 men 1st Battalion Loyal North Lancashire Regiment.
1 section 4th Battery, Royal Field Artillery.

The whole was under command of Captain Montagu, 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers.

The main body moved off at 4 a.m., as follows:—

Advance guard:—
1 squadron Cape Police.
Ashburner's Light Horse.
British South Africa Police.
1 pompom Diamond Field Artillery.
Main body—
Cullinan's Horse,
British South Africa Police.

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Detachment 5th Regiment, Imperial Yeomanry.
1 section 38th Battery, Royal Field Artillery.
Rearguard—
Diamond Field Horse.
Dennison's Scouts.

Thinking there was a likelihood of an attack in rear, I had called Major Paris' attention to the necessity of putting thoroughly reliable troops in the rearguard. The country through which we passed was flat and without bush.

At daybreak (about 5 a.m.) a heavy fire was opened on the rearguard. The fire was so intense that the rear screen was at once reinforced by the section of the 38th Battery, and one pompom Diamond Field Artillery. A portion of Ashburner's Light Horse and the detachment of the 5th Imperial Yeomanry were extended on either flank, round which the enemy seemed intent on galloping.

At this time (5 30 a. m,) the ox convoy was about a mile in front of the baggage, which was moving in four lines well closed up. I therefore ordered the ox convoy to halt, and the baggage to join it. Major Berange was directed to move, with the police that were with him, towards a fresh body of the enemy, who now appeared on our right rear. The time was about 6 a.m.

I joined the ox convoy about this time, and found Captain Tilney, D A.A.G., assisting Captain Montagu, 1st Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers, Commanding the Infantry, to extend the men to meet the attack on our right flank.

The section 4th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, and the pom-pom "GG" Section, had already taken up a position to meet this attack.

I could see no mounted men available, and could only assume that they had all gone to reinforce the rear screen, so I ordered the baggage to continue to advance, it being impossible to move the ox convoy, as the native drivers were lying under the wagons and refused to move.

I would here like to draw attention to the orderly manner and complete control exercised by Lieutenant Hartley, Transport officer to Major Paris's column, over the mule wagons during the fight.

The Boers, attacking the rearguard, had come on with great determination right amongst the rear sceen, but the support to the screen having been reinforced by Ashburner's Light Horse, Cullinan's Horse, and some of the 5th Imperial Yeomanry, held them in check till about 6 30 a.m. A heavy attack then developed on our rear and right flank, which caused, as far as I could see, all mounted troops then in rear (some of them which had originally been there had moved off towards the flanks to meet threatened attacks) to break, and they galloped in complete confusion past our lef tflank.

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The section 38th Battery was thus left unprotected, but continued in action until every man, with the exception of Lieutenant Nesham, was hit. I am informed that this officer was called upon to surrender, and on refusing to do so was killed.

The attack on our right flank was pressed home to within 600 yards of the gun of the 4th Battery.

I then gave orders for a kraal about one mile along the road to Leeuwkuil to be occupied, and sent orders to rally the mounted men on the rising ground beyond the kraal. The kraal was occupied by Major Paris and Major Berange with some 40 men. The mounted troops in the meantime continued their retirement. I remained with the guns, 4th Battery, and Infantry until my horse was killed, and my thigh fractured by a bullet.

They held out in a most splendid manner until about 9 30 a.m. when all the men round the guns had been shot down, and Lieutenant Venning, commanding the section had been killed. In the meantime, the two guns and a pompom with Commandant Cellier's commando had rendered the kraal untenable, when the men at the kraal and those remaining with the baggage surrendered.

The Boer commandants present were—Delarey, Vermaas, Celliers, Kemp, Van Zyl, D. Botha, and Lemmer. It is difficult to estimate the number of Boers on the field, but I should say about 1,500. General Delarey treated myself and the prisoners with the greatest kindness, and left Gen. Celliers to look after our wounded on the ground; they buried 11 of their own men at Kareelaagte, and, from what I can learn, their losses were heavy.

12. I beg to draw attention to the good work done by Major Paris in endeavouring to keep the mounted troops in hand, and to the promptitude with which Captain Tilney 17th Lancers, D.A.A.G. assisted in placing the Infantry round the convoy.

I would also call attention to the gallant manner in which Lieutenants Nesham and Venning, Royal Field Artillery, stuck to their guns.

Captain Montagu, Commanding detachment, 1st Northumberland Fusiliers, and Lieut. Paul commanding detachment 1st Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, held on until further resistance was impossible. Civil Surgeon Prentice with the rearguard, and Captain Thuston, R.A.M.C., with the guns, continued bandaging the wounded throughout the engagement.

Col. Townsend, C.B., my Principal Medical officer, remained in the fighting line until he had received three wounds; he has from the commencement of the campaign always acted most gallantly.

Captain Fernyhough did good work with the rearguard during the action. He has been of very great value to me ever since he has served under me.

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A large number of Boers were dressed in khaki, many of them wearing the chevrons of non-commissioned officers. This, in several instances, led to misapprehension by our troops, and to losses by death, wounds, and capture among us. Owing to having been wounded and taken prisoner, I am unable to give any list of casualties. This report is, for the same reason, based solely on what came under my own observation, and what I have been able to gather from the few officers with whom I have had the opportunity of speaking on the subject.

It may be that I have omitted to bring to notice some who distinguished themselves during the action, and that Major Paris can supply this deficiency.

I have the honour, &c.,

METHUEN, Lieut.-General.

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LORD KITCHENER'S DESPATCH.

The *London Gazette* contains the following account of the affair from the Commander-in-Chief:—

At daybreak (about 5 a.m.) a heavy fire was opened upon the rearguard and orders were given for its reinforcement from the front by two guns of the 38th Battery, a pompom, Ashburner's Light Horse, and a detachment of the 5th Imperial Yeomanry. The enemy also showed a disposition to gallop round from the rear and assail the flanks of the column as well.

At 5·30 a.m. the ox convoy, then about a mile in advance, was ordered to halt, and the escort was disposed round it ready to repel attack; the mule wagons at this time were rapidly closing up towards the ox convoy.

The Boers upon our right rear flank then developed a heavy attack which caused the sudden retirement and ultimate stampede of the mounted men, most of whom galloped past the left flank of the convoy in complete confusion. The section of the 38th Battery was thus left unprotected. but the detachment gallantly continued to serve the guns until every man, except Lieutenant Nesham, was killed or wounded. This young Officer, so Lord Methuen is informed, was then summoned to surrender, and on his refusing to do so was also shot down.

As the mounted screen was driven off the field the enemy advanced rapidly, intermingled with the fugitives, and pressed home a vigorous and determined attack upon the convoy, the defence of which was maintained for some time by the Infantry, under Lord Methuen himself, supported by the two guns of the 4th Battery. Orders had, in the meantime, been sent for the mounted men to be rallied upon a commanding ridge 2,000 yards away, along the road to Leeuwkuil, and though few of them could be induced to hold their ground. a party of some 40 men, under Major Paris, established themselves in an isolated kraal about 800 yards from the convoy, from which they endeavoured to support the Infantry to the best of their ability.

The defence made by the Infantry and guns lasted until 9 a m., by which time Lord Methuen had been seriously wounded, and Lieutenant Venning, Royal Artillery, and all the men at the guns shot down.

Further resistance became useless and surrender inevitable. Those in kraal held out until two guns and a pompom rendered their position untenable, when they too, surrendered, having lost nine of their number killed and wounded in its defence.

The Boer Commanders present were Generals Delarey, Kemp,

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Vermaas, and Celliers, and Commandants Van Zyl, D. Botha, and Lemmer, who apparently had some 1,500 men under thier orders. General Delarey treated Lord Methuen with kindness and consideration, and on the 13th March sent him into Klerksdorp for better medical treatment.

Our casualties in this unfortunate engagement were 4 officers and 64 other ranks killed, and 10 Officers and 111 other ranks wounded, the number of unwounded prisoners remaining in the enemy's hands being 205. What the Boer losses were I am unable to say, but 20 of their number are known to have been killed, and they probably had other casualties.

The cause of the reverse is, I am afraid, to be found in the behaviour of the bulk of the mounted troops who offered a very feeble and ineffectual resistance, and then left the Infantry and guns to struggle against superior numbers. I do not, however, intend this criticism to apply to the whole of the mounted men, for several parties held out to the last, notably the one at the kraal, commanded by Major Paris.

Lieutenant-Colonel Grenfell, who arrived at Rooirantjesfontein at the appointed time, was, unfortunately, too far off to render any assistance to Lord Methuen. He only heard of the reverse the day after its occurrence, and it was then too late for him to afford support. When he did hear of it he promptly took steps to reinforce the garrison of Lichtenburg, in case the Boers should attempt to follow up their success in that direction, and he then moved upon Vaalbank (116) on the Lichtenburg-Schoonspruit blockhouse line.

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IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

The following comments upon the disaster, and Lord Methuen were made in the House of Lords, on the 10th March, when the news was received :—

Lord Roberts, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army, and as one who in South Africa had had full opportunities of estimating Lord Methuen's military qualifications as a commander, felt it would be unfair to his lordship and discouraging to the other commanders in the field if he were not to make, on the occasion of this unfortunate occurrence, some expression of his appreciation of Lord Methuen's services during the war. After personally inquiring into the circumstances connected with the action at Magersfontein he arrived at the conclusion that Lord Methuen could not be blamed for the failure to relieve Kimberley, and he decided, therefore, to keep him in his command. From that time to the present Lord Methuen had carried on his work with great intelligence and perseverance. He asked their lordships to agree with him in his sympathy for this gallant officer in his present unfortunate position; and to reserve any adverse criticism on what had taken place until they had some more definite information.

Lord Spencer felt certain that they all had the deepest sympathy for one who had always been regarded as one of the most zealous soldiers in the service of this country.

Lord Salisbury was sure the feeling in this House would be one of sincere sympathy with the generous and graceful language which had been used by the Commander-in-Chief. They were quite certain that Lord Methuen had displayed on this occasion the greatest gallantry and that he deserved the highest sympathy of His Majesty's subjects. He desired to enforce the suggestion of the Commander-in-Chief that they should defer any criticism of the very sad intelligence which had reached them until all the details were more fully before them.

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VALEDICTORY.

The following telegram was sent by Lord Methuen from Klerksdorp to the C.S.O., Mafeking, which place was the First Division's head quarters:—"Please wish my Division Good-bye from me. I had hoped to have served throughout the Campaign, but it has been willed otherwise."

From C.S.O.W.D., Vryburg, to Lord Methuen, Klerksdorp. March 19, C. 1824. "Your message of farewell is published to-day in District orders, the last issued in your name, and has been communicated to Colonel Von Donop by telegram. All ranks in Western District unite with the Historic First Division in regret at passing from the command of a trusted and beloved leader and express earnest hope of your speedy recovery."

From Lord Methuen, Klerksdorp, To Col. Vyvyan, Vryburg: "Heartily I thank you for your Telegram, C. 1824. I have always linked the 1st Division and the Western District as one, but to save any mistake, please let my meassage be issued as a farewell order to the Western District as well as to the 1st Division. No Commander ever said farewell to a more loyal or finer body of men."

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ERRATUM.

PAGE 44.—The Highland Brigade consisted of 2nd Black Watch, 2nd Seaforths, 1st Highland Light Infantry, 1st Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. The 1st Gordons were with the Supply column and were brought up during the fight.

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